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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should FICA taxes be deducted from foreign workers in the CNMI?

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INSIDE



Celebrity Wedding

Saipan hosted the wedding ceremony and reception of Japanese actor Arthur Kuroda.

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Facing bankruptcy, the U.S. Postal Service is pushing ahead with unprecedented cuts to first-class mail next spring.

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FHB REPORT SAYS:

'NMI economy continues to lack promise'

Weak tourism numbers further aggravated by the earthquake and tsunami in Japan last March, coupled with increasing labor costs and rising fuel and shipping prices, have conspired to further weaken an already struggling CNMI economy, according to a new First Hawaiian Bank economic analysis of Guam and the CNMI.

The report was prepared for the bank by Dr. Maria Claret M. Ruane, resident development economist at the University of Guam-Pacific Center for Economic Initiatives.

"The economy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands continues to lack promise," Ruane said.

"Tourism, which has been on a decline for some time, took a turn for the worse as a result of the earthquake and

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OBSTACLE COURSE

Cadet Wes Tomokane, center, prepares to pass down a wooden plank used in clearing an obstacle course at the 2011 Army ROTC Ranger Challenge held at Joint-Base Lewis-McCord in Washington last month. Tomokane, a former student of the Northern Marianas College, recently relocated to Guam to attend the University of Guam's Senior Reserve Officers Training Corps, which trains college students to become leaders in the U.S. Army. NMC



PENDING CLARIFICATION FROM SSA

Fitial admin wants 'stay' on FICA taxes

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The Fitial administration described yesterday as "troubling," "inappropriate," and "discriminatory" an administrative decision to lift the exemption of Filipino, as well as Korean workers in the

CNMI, from paying the Federal Income Tax Act taxes.

FICA covers U.S. Social Security and Medicare taxes.

Press secretary Angel Demapan said in view of concerns about the taxes, the Fitial administration believes that the administrative decision "should be stayed pending

clarification that the Fitial administration is preparing to request from the Social Security Administration."

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service, in an Oct. 5 letter, said Filipino workers in the CNMI are no longer exempt from FICA, unless

See FITIAL on Page 4

FIRST HOUSE ARTICLE 12 INITIATIVE TO PASS IN 17TH LEGISLATURE

Land ownership for those with 'at least some degree' of indigenous blood

» **8 other bills, resolutions passed**

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

By a vote of 15-0, the House of Repre-

sentatives passed yesterday afternoon an Article 12 initiative that specifically changes the 25 percent or one-quarter blood quantum requirement to only "at least some degree" of Chamorro or Carolinian blood or a combination of these, in order to be considered a person of North-

ern Marianas descent and therefore can own land in the CNMI.

Article 12 of the NMI Constitution restricts land ownership to persons of Northern Marianas descent or NMDs.

In yesterday's session, the House passed eight other bills and resolutions,

including one that requires employers to provide resident workers with the same level of wages and benefits as foreign workers.

Vice Speaker Felicidad Ogumoro (Cov-Saipan), author of House Legisla-

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Local

Visa reform seeks to ease travel to CNMI, rest of US

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) joined 34 other U.S. House of Representatives members in seeking tourist visa reform to ease travel to the United States, including the CNMI.

Sablan signed off on a Dec. 1 bipartisan letter encouraging the House and Senate Appropriators on State and Foreign Operations to include provisions to implement two pilot programs to im-

prove visa service for travelers to the U.S.

The first program requires the Secretary of State to hire additional consular officers in the People's Republic of China, Brazil, and India to meet its standard of reviewing tourist visa applicants within 30 days; to conduct a risk-benefit analysis of extending the visa for Chinese travelers; and to

forecast demand over the next five years and establish a response plan.

The second program allows the State Secretary to develop a pilot program, using secure remote video-conferencing technology, to process B-1 and B-2 visas.

Sablan said these programs will help increase access to Chinese visitors, which is critical to economic recovery.



Sablan

"Tourism continues to decline in the Northern Marianas with a 4 percent drop in October arrivals as compared to October 2010 and overall visitor arrivals down 8 percent for fiscal year 2011. We must find ways to attract more visitors and make it easier for them to travel to our islands," Sablan said.

The delegate thanked Reps. Mike Honda (D-CA) and Joe Heck, D.O. (R-NV) for leading this effort.

In their four-page letter, the Congress members said their requests in no way compromise U.S. national security and do not require new appropriated dollars, "but they do promise to stimulate our nation's economy almost immediately."



A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.

Diving in the Marianas

In October 2011, 1,622 visitors came to the Northern Mariana Islands specifically to dive. That's about 1 out of every 10 tourists.



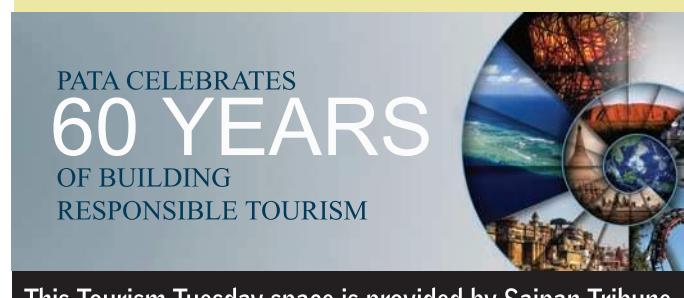
In addition to its year round tropical climate and high visibility, several other features make the Northern Mariana attractive to divers. Numerous beach dives on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota make it easy and economical for divers. In addition, the Northern Marianas offers a wide assort of dives, ranging from wreck to cavern to night dives.



Popular beach dives include **Laulau Beach**, **Obyan Beach**, and **Ladder Beach**. Rota and Tinian both boast

Blue Hole cavern dives, while the **Grotto** on Saipan was once voted #2 Best Cavern Dive in the World by **Skindiver** magazine.

Each year the **Marianas Visitors Authority** and its tourism partners conduct the **Dive My Marianas** campaign to attract both new and experienced divers. A number of the underwater wonders captured with cameras by these divers are featured in the annual MVA calendar.



This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

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'Negotiation on lease proposal with MPLT ongoing'

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Negotiations between the NMI Retirement Fund and the Marianas Public Land Trust have not stopped but a decision has yet to be reached on the issue, according to Fund board chair Sixto Igisomar yesterday. MPLT wants to occupy an office at the Fund's building on Capital Hill.

Igisomar said that, as of yesterday, he has no information whether MPLT had cancelled that proposal with the Fund or terminated the negotiation with the party.

"I am aware that there is a discussion and I haven't received any formal letter from the MPLT chairman stating that the proposal is no longer valid," he said.

The board had instructed its legal counsels to work with MPLT in ironing out the details of the lease agreement before a final lease term is signed.

Saipan Tribune tried but failed to contact MPLT chair Alvaro Santos. He had earlier said

\$16M ship disposal project cancelled

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

An investor who had been approved to use a portion of the Saipan seaport for a multimillion-dollar ship disposal facility has cancelled the project, according to Commonwealth Ports Authority acting board chair Manny Villagomez.

Villagomez disclosed to *Saipan Tribune* that the board now considers the project "inactive" after waiting for more than a year for it to push through. He said that Worldwide Salvage Saipan LLC had sent them a letter months ago indicating its decision to cancel the project. The company also surrendered its lease agreement with CPA.

"They gave up the plan and since we haven't heard anything from them for past several months, the board considers the lease agreement it issued as inactive," Villagomez said.

Worldwide Salvage Saipan LLC had proposed in late 2009 to build a \$16 million ship disposal program on Saipan, at no cost to the government. Worldwide Salvage wanted to tow old ships from California, Texas, and Virginia to the island where they will be dismantled and parts will be shipped out. It asked to lease a portion of the Saipan port for the project. The CPA board approved a temporary lease agreement so that the company could move forward with the other federal requirements for the project.

Villagomez expressed himself disappointed with the company's failed plan and said the board will revisit the inactive lease agreement so it could be given to other potential investors that may want to use the dock.

Based on the original pro-

that due to some "stringent conditions" in the proposed lease agreement, the MPLT board may have to revisit the plan.

According to Igisomar, the Fund is not offering a higher cost than what MPLT proposed in its lease offer. "I don't believe that the Fund asked for more on the rates. Until we receive words from MPLT, I believe negotiation has not stopped," said Igisomar, adding that the lease proposal will be among the items that will be discussed at the board's next meeting.

MPLT currently holds offices at the former Commonwealth Election Commission office on Capital Hill. With the space being assigned to the Department of Homeland Security, the agency needs a new location for its office.

It was earlier disclosed that MPLT had purchased a 4,000-square meter piece of land on Capital Hill for about \$200,000 in 2007 for a planned commercial building project where it will also house its office. The

ensuing financial crisis resulted in the project being shelved.

MPLT is a semi-government

agency that receives land lease payments on government property. These payments are invest-

ed and the earnings are remitted to the general fund. As of Sept. 30, 2011, the MPLT portfolio

was valued at \$71 million, all invested in fixed income instruments and equities.

Man lands in jail for fight over newspaper

A fight over a newspaper put a 40-year-old man in jail for beating a man in San Antonio on Friday afternoon.

Yubo Qiu, 40, was arrested on charges of assault, assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, and disturbing the peace.

A \$6,250 cash bail was ini-

tially imposed for Qiu's temporary liberty. He was taken to the Superior Court yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing.

Detective Catherine B. Pangilinan stated in her report that investigation showed that the victim, Guoxi Liang, bought a Chinese newspaper from a store.

As Liang was sitting by the windows of a building and reading the newspaper, Qiu approached and suddenly grabbed the newspaper away.

Liang confronted Qiu for what he did. But Qiu instead punched him on the head.

Qiu also threw a rock at Li-

ang, but missed. The suspect picked up a 2x2 piece of lumber and swung at Liang, but missed again.

Qiu threatened the victim that he would kill him if he was going to call the police. The suspect then fled toward Beach Road on his bicycle.

Later that afternoon, police arrested Qiu in San Antonio. (Ferdie de la Torre)

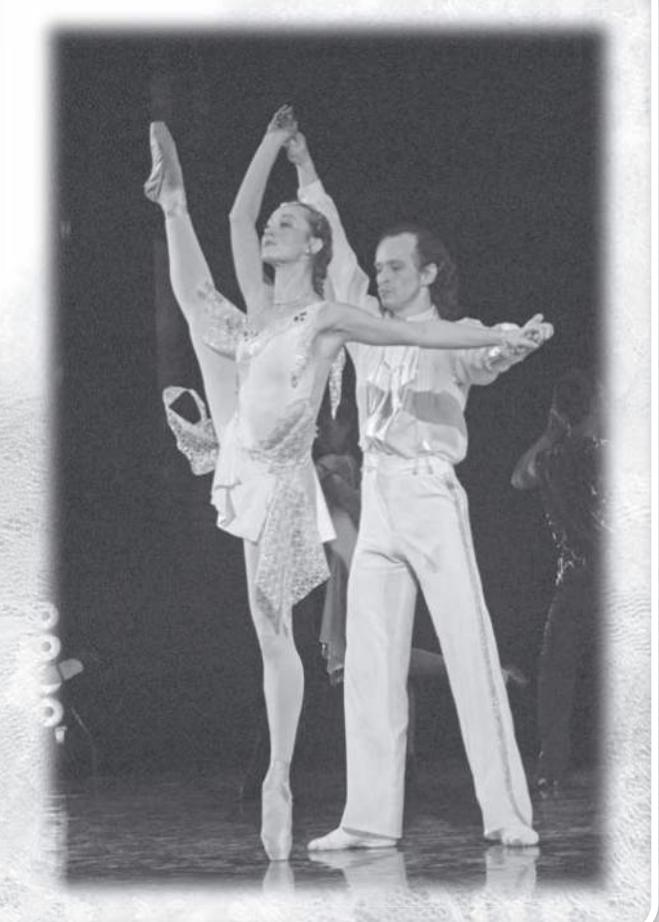
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LAND*From Page 1*

tive Initiative 17-3, House Draft 1, said her bill also addresses the concerns of those who want to repeal Article 12 in its entirety.

Just like Rep. Ray Tebuteb (R-Saipan) and Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan), Ogumoro said the initiative allows anyone who could prove to the court that they have "at least some degree" of indigenous blood to be considered NMD and therefore qualify to own land in the CNMI.

As it is now, future generations of Chamorro and Carolinian families may not be able to own land because they fall below the 25 percent blood quantum requirement, an "unfair" requirement to many in the community who want to pass on to their descendants their property.

Ogumoro said she's thankful for her colleagues in supporting the measure amending Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution and hopes the Senate will do the same.

"We'd like to see this initiative placed on the ballot in November 2012," Ogumoro told *Saipan Tribune*.

Section 805 of the Covenant allows the CNMI to revisit its land alienation restrictions 25 years after the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement in 1986.

ECONOMY*From Page 1*

tsunami in Japan, the main source of CNMI tourists. Local businesses face weak demand, a 66-percent rise in labor costs since 2007, and increased fuel and shipping costs," she added.

In key measures of the CNMI economy, the report noted:

- The CNMI's Gross Island Product declined by almost 20 percent between 2008 and 2009, and by more than 9 percent on an annual basis from 2002-09. "This translates to a more than 4 percent annual decrease in per-person real income between 2002 and 2009," Ruane said.
- Based on preliminary U.S. Census estimates, the CNMI's population in 2010 was 53,883, a loss of 22 percent since 2000.
- CPI inflation for 2010 was 6.4 percent. Overall, the rate has been increasing since 2007.

Steep tourism decline

"Unfortunately, tourism in the CNMI trended down for several years, declining 30 percent from 2005 to 2009 when 353,956 tourists visited CNMI," Ruane said.

This number increased to 379,091 in 2010. Between January and August 2011, tourism declined 13.8 percent compared to the same period in 2010.

"As in Guam, the largest factor affecting tourist arrivals to the CNMI in 2011 was the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in March," Ruane said.

She said reduced flights from Korea reduced the tourist flow from there, but "additional flights and upsizing of airplanes by Asiana Airlines in coming months are expected to lead to a recovery in the number of Korean tourists during the balance of 2011 and into 2012."

Minimum wage increases

As a precursor to implementation of the federalization law in 2009, CNMI

That 25-year period will end in 2011, and this is the reason why there's as many as four initiatives seeking to tinker with Article 12.

Tebuteb, one of those who signed off on a committee report recommending passage of Ogumoro's initiative, said HLI 17-3, HD1 "promotes fairness."

Many citizens today are worried that their "children's children's children" will no longer be able to own land because they no longer possess at least one-quarter Chamorro or Carolinian blood to be considered an NMD.

House minority leader Joe Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) and Torres separately said while they support Ogumoro's initiative, they also support two identical bills in the House and Senate seeking a vote on whether to maintain or repeal Article 12.

"If either of the two initiatives passes, then Ogumoro's initiative will become moot. But we don't know whether those initiatives will pass," said Deleon Guerrero, author of a pending initiative asking voters whether they want to maintain or repeal Article 12.

Deleon Guerrero said he asked the Committee on Natural Resources to hold off action on his initiative to give way to Manglona's similar Senate initiative which had already gone through public hearings.

Ogumoro's initiative is the first one related to Article 12 to "move" in the 17th Legislature. Besides Deleon

minimum wages have increased significantly since 2007, from an hourly rate of \$3.05 to the current \$5.05. The original plan was to increase the minimum by \$0.50 every year until it reaches the prevailing federal level (currently \$7.25) by 2015.

"Many local businesses have struggled with the 66-percent wage increase since 2007 while facing weak product demand and low revenues," Ruane said.

The planned September 2011 increase was postponed and "there is support for postponing future increases until the CNMI economy is able to accommodate such changes," she said.

A June 2011 study by the U.S. General Accountability Office found that:

- Employment in all sectors in the CNMI decreased by 13 percent from 2008-2009, while employment in tourism decreased by 8 percent.

- Earnings of all employed during 2008-2009 increased by 3 percent above and beyond the inflation rate for that year, while earnings by minimum-wage earners who kept their employment and work hours in 2008-2009 increased by 9 percent.

- 73 percent of those working in tourism had an increase in wages following the September 2010 minimum wage increase.

- By early 2012, tourism employers representing 62 percent of workers have plans to lay off workers, although none indicated the action to be a result of minimum wage increases.

- CNMI workers surveyed indicated that they would like raises but worry about losing their jobs or reducing their work hours.

Uncertainty in Guam

The fallout from the Japan earthquake and ongoing discussions in Tokyo and Washington over the scope and timing of Guam's pending military buildup, meanwhile, have created uncertainty for Guam's economic outlook in 2012, according to the same report from First Hawaiian Bank.

Guerrero and Manglona's initiatives, Sen. Luis Crisostimo (Ind-Saipan) also has a pending initiative extending the cap on private land leases from 55 years to 99 years, among other things.

All the 15 House members present during yesterday's session voted "yes" on Ogumoro's initiative.

The absent members were Reps. Froilan Tenorio (Cov-Saipan), Ray Palacios (Cov-Saipan), Ray Basa (Cov-Saipan), Ray Yumul (R-Saipan), and Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan).

The Fitial administration has maintained that given the many years that have passed since the inception of Article 12, "the administration agrees that it is an opportune time to revisit the issue of determining an NMD by way of the blood quantum."

If HLI 17-3 is also passed by the Senate, it will be presented to voters in the next election.

Voters will decide whether having at least some degree of Chamorro or Carolinian blood or a combination, or an adopted child of an NMD if adopted while under 18, can acquire permanent and long-term interest in real property within the CNMI and whether it's in the best interest of the people of the CNMI.

Other bills, resolutions passed

Besides passing Ogumoro's HLI 17-3, HD1, the House also passed the following measures:

"A year ago, economic signals for Guam were upbeat, but subsequent developments have dampened some of that optimism and generated doubts about short-term prospects for two of the island's main economic drivers, tourism and the military," Dr. Ruane said. "Current and future developments will test the Guam economy and provide it with an opportunity to show its resilience."

In key sectors of the Guam economy, the report noted:

- Tourism was down 4.8 percent between January and October 2011, owing to the March earthquake in Japan, the main source of Guam's visitors. Fortunately, there has been some rebound in tourist arrivals from Japan since June, other tourist markets show promise and the weakening of the U.S. dollar makes Guam vacations more affordable.

- The terms, size and timing of the long-planned relocation of troops from Japan to Guam have become the subject of increasing speculation due to fiscal problems in Japanese and U.S. governments and a delay in releasing the Master Plan. The Navy Secretary says the plan will likely look "much different" than had been envisioned earlier.

- Employment on Guam is down 1.35 in 2011, with decreases in both private and local government jobs. Unemployment is at double-digit levels.

- The inflation rate inched up from 2010 but continues to be low.

- The real estate market sent mixed signals, with both strong sales volume and large median price declines.

"2011 started off with a lot of promise," Ruane said. "Tourism looked like it could repeat its strong performance of 2010 when almost 1.2 million tourists visited Guam. The military buildup was relatively on track; the Record of Decision, signed in September 2010, signaled for many the start of large-scale construction and creation of thousands of new jobs."

For the full Economic Report, visit fbh.com. (*Saipan Tribune*)

- House Bill 17-225 or the Resident Workers Fair Compensation Act of 2011, introduced by Rep. Tony Sablan (R-Saipan). The bill seeks to provide resident workers with the same level of wages and benefits as foreign workers, including but not limited to food, housing, transportation, health insurance, and medical expenses.

- House Bill 17-224, introduced by Rep. Teresita Santos (Ind-Rota), seeks to rename two merged schools on Rota as the Dr. Rita Hocog Inos Junior/Senior High School.

- House Bill 17-182, HD1, by Rep. Stanley Torres (Ind-Saipan), seeks to, among other things, require that all terminations and contract non-renewals in the Public School System be actuated "only with cause." Unlike the other bills that mostly passed on a 15-0 vote, Torres's bill passed by a vote of 9-6.

- House Bill 17-77, HD1, by Speaker Eli Cabrera (R-Saipan), providing op-

tion to continue government life insurance coverage under the same group terms and contribution or not.

- Senate Bill 17-23, SD1, authored by Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota). The House reconsidered their previous action to "file" the bill, which seeks to give certain Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers a 21-day grace period after the billing date to pay their utility bills.

- House Resolution 17-81, by Santos, recognizing David Ayuyu Atalig for his contributions to the CNMI, especially to Rota.

- House Resolution 17-82, by Ogumoro, congratulating the Mount Carmel High School Mock Trial participants in their victory at the Nov. 19 Annual Asia-Pacific Mock Trial Competition held in Guam.
- House Resolution 17-83, by Santos, urging the governor to exempt Customs and Quarantine officers and inspectors from austerity measures.

about the FICA tax applicability among Filipino and Korean workers, even before the final worker regulations came out.

She also said there's little time between the release of the regulations and the Nov. 28 deadline for filing most Commonwealth-only worker petitions, as well as in addressing related matters related to the rules including the FICA taxes.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the largest business organization in the CNMI with some 150 members, also received only on Friday a press statement from Deloitte & Touche LLP citing an Oct. 5 letter outlining changes to the way Social Security taxes are applied to Filipino workers in the CNMI.

"Unless an individual is eligible for FICA exemption based on some other circumstances, FICA taxes will apply to these Filipino workers," said Lynne Camillo, branch chief of IRS's Employment Tax Branch 2.

But many employers want to know whether this should have taken effect on Nov. 28, 2011 or at a later date. The issue has also drawn different views from community members.

Rey Perez, 45, a Filipino private school teacher on Saipan, said employees and employers have no choice but to follow the law, in this case, on paying federal taxes.

Perez said in his view, paying the FICA taxes will be beneficial to foreign workers who would be granted a change of status or improved status that will allow them to stay longer in the CNMI and therefore reap the benefits of U.S. Social Security and Medicare.

But just like others interviewed, Perez said other foreign workers who may lose their job in a year or two, for example, would not benefit from contributing to the federal program.

For a foreign worker earning a minimum wage of \$5.05 an hour, the monthly FICA tax deduction will be over \$45. The employer of such foreign worker also has to shell out almost \$62 a month for each employee covered by the FICA taxes in these times of financial hardships.

These are on top of the CNMI taxes that employees and employers pay.

Some accountants on island are saying that, as far as they know, workers may only benefit from their FICA tax deductions if they contribute to the system for 40 quarters or for 10 years. But the transition period ends on Dec. 31, 2014. After that, the foreign worker population will be zeroed out, unless the transition period is extended.

Man, 70, suffers fractured jaw after 3 men allegedly beat him up

A 70-year-old man sustained a fractured left jaw after three men allegedly beat him up when he accidentally hit a girl with his truck along Flame Tree Road in Dandan last Friday morning.

Pantaleon P. De Jillas' spine was also swollen, possibly from being kicked, according to a police detective.

De Jillas' son, Ernie Matagolai De Jillas, was also treated by paramedics after one of the three men also smacked his right ear with a piece of hollow block.

Police arrested Juan Laniyo Norita, 48, and his son, Jerome Kaipat Norita, 23, on charges of aggravated assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, and disturbing the peace.

The third suspect, Fred Kaipat, has not been arrested yet. The three are related to the girl, who was hit by the truck.

A \$16,250 cash bail each was initially imposed on Juan and Jerome Norita. The two were taken to the Superior Court yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing.

Detective Raymond B. Borja stated in his report that a police officer responded to Flame Tree Road in Dandan on Friday at 7:19am after receiving a call about a female juvenile that was struck by a vehicle.

When the officer arrived at the scene, he noticed a group of individuals standing around a girl, who was lying on the roadway. The girl was gasping for breath and she had blood on her mouth.

Jerome Norita told the responding officer that the victim was struck by a Nissan pickup truck.

Ernie De Jillas approached the officer and told him that Juan and Jerome Norita, along with Fred Kaipat, beat him up. Ernie De Jillas' right ear was bleeding at the time.

The officer then approached the 70-year-old Pantaleon De Jillas, who was walking toward an

ambulance. The officer learned that Pantaleon De Jillas was the driver of the pickup truck that was involved in the accident.

Pantaleon De Jillas, whose left face was swollen at the time, told the officer that Juan and Jerome Norita and Fred Kaipat punched and kicked him repeatedly. Borja said the victim's left cheek was swollen and he was complaining of pain on his left face and back.

Borja said that, according to Pantaleon De Jillas, he was driving home along Flame Tree Road at 15 miles per hour when he saw a girl walking.

When it started to rain, the girl turned to the right, directly in front of the truck. De Jillas said he tried to avoid the girl, but the truck still ended up hitting her.

When Pantaleon De Jillas got down from the truck and leaned over to check the girl, Jerome Norita tackled him from behind and punched him.

Juan Norita and Fred Kaipat came and also allegedly joined in punching and kicking him, causing him to fall.

After receiving a call about the beating of their father, Ernie De Jillas and his brother proceeded to the scene, where they saw their father lying on the ground.

Ernie De Jillas said he was armed with a machete as he was not aware what was going on. As Ernie and his brother got down from their car, the three suspects started throwing pieces of hollow blocks and rocks at them.

It was Juan Norita who allegedly smacked Ernie De Jillas with a piece of hollow block that pierced his right ear.

The suspects chased Ernie De Jillas, who threw down his machete. When Ernie De Jillas tripped and fell to the ground, Jerome Norita allegedly pointed the machete at him.

The girl was treated for her injuries. (Ferdie de la Torre)



IN APPRECIATION

Local philanthropist Angel Ray T. Guererro, fourth from right, accepts a certificate of appreciation from the Northern Marianas College for his recent donation to the college's Counseling and Career Center, and Library. Guererro, who was accompanied by his parents, seated, donated bookshelves, wall partitions, and other materials to be utilized by NMC students. Standing from left, Leo Pangelinan, dean of Student Services; Annie Santos, testing coordinator; Lawrence Camacho, Associated Students of NMC president; Dr. Sharon Y. Hart, NMC president; Guererro; Juan Lizama, Board of Regents chairperson; Matthew Pastula, director of Library Programs and Services; and Dr. Timothy Baker, director of Counseling Programs and Services.

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Cabrera steps down as NMC honorary regent

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Board of Regents of the Northern Marianas College has lost one honorary member following the resignation of newly elected staff senate

president Lorraine Cabrera, just a week after she assumed the position.

Cabrera confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that she quit the position, along with vice president Ross Manglona, due to the "reclassification" of po-

sitions being conducted by the college management.

Cabrera is the Adult Basic Education director, while Manglona is the director for NMC-CREES program. Both seats are considered administrators based on the new

category identified by the college.

At the last board meeting, NMC president Sharon Hart disclosed that Cabrera's position as honorary member is up for grabs and the staff of the college will select its new president soon through an election.

Hart said NMC is currently doing proper reclassification of

positions that will correctly categorize employees' posts. Once it completes the process, a final recommendation will be turned in to the board.

For several years, the college had two main categories of employees: faculty and staff, of which both presi-

dents of the organizations serve as honorary board member. With the re-classification of posts, there are two categories identified under the staff category—the administrators and the regular staff.

Saipan Tribune learned that because Cabrera's and Manglona's positions fall under the administrators division, the two are not eligible

to run for the staff senate positions, which are now open only to those under the regular staff category.

With the absence of the president and vice president of the staff senate organization, its treasurer/secretary Cristina Cruz is serving as its sole act-



Cabrera

OAG files criminal case vs police sergeant for allegedly stealing utility services

» Cop assigned with DPS summons, issued with summons

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General has charged Police Sgt. Vicente O. Tagabuel and another person for allegedly stealing utility services.

Assistant attorney general Russell Lorfing filed an information charging Tagabuel with one count of theft of utility services.

Lorfing said that, on April 15 to 27, 2011 on Saipan, Tagabuel "intended to obtain utility services for his benefit or for the benefit of another without paying the full lawful amount."

Lorfing said Tagabuel "knowingly committed the theft of utility services totaling in the approximate amount of \$196.70 by passing the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. meter."

Tagabuel was not arrested as the OAG only served him with

penal summons to appear in the Superior Court to answer the case on Dec. 12, 2011 at 9am.

Saipan Tribune yesterday tried but failed to get comments from Sgt. Tagabuel, who is assigned with the Department of Public Safety's summons and warrant office.

Tagabuel was among three police officers whose hiring and promotion were challenged in a lawsuit filed by Police Sgt. James C. Deleon Guerrero and 25 other police officers.

Meanwhile, Lorfing filed a separate information charging Eloise J. Castro with one count of theft of utility services.

Lorfing said that, on May 3 to July 6, 2011 on Saipan, Castro "intended to obtain utility services for her benefit or for the benefit of another without paying the full lawful amount."

The prosecutor said Castro "knowingly committed the theft

of utility services totaling in the approximate amount of \$690.92 by passing the CUC meter."

Castro was also not arrested as the OAG only summoned her to appear and answer the case in court on Dec. 12, 2011 at 9am.

Last week, the OAG filed an amended information to include Joanna C. Pai's mother as co-defendant in the case over the alleged stealing of power utility services over \$51,000.

Assistant attorney general Shelli Neal filed the first amended information that charged Mrs. Pai and her mother, Columba I. Chong, with theft of utility services.

In Mrs. Pai's motion to dismiss, attorney Rexford Kosack stated that the only reason Mrs. Pai has been charged is that she is married to Public Auditor Michael Pai who has attracted the ire of attorney general Edward T. Buckingham.

USP4GG sponsors immigration forum this Thursday

The U.S. Pinoys for Good Governance will be holding an immigration forum on Thursday, Dec. 8, from 5pm to 9pm at the Marianas Business Plaza lobby.

The forum will be conducted by Atty. Ted Laguatan, a U.S. immigration and human rights lawyer and legal counsel and spokesperson of the U.S. Pinoys for Good Governance.

Laguatan is a member of the California State Bar and has been honored by the California State Bar in 2010 as one of only 29 U.S. lawyers officially certified continuously for more than 20 years as Expert-Specialist in Immigration Law; and a book author of "A Layman's Guidebook on Immigration Law." He has won landmark

immigration law cases.

Admission to the forum is free and it is a first come, first served basis.

Dr. Celia B. Lamkin, the president of U.S. Pinoys for Good Governance (Marianas Chapter) and USP4GG CNMI representative, would like to inform all foreign workers and the public that neither Laguatan nor USP4GG is soliciting any moneys nor

have they authorized anyone to collect or ask money using Laguatan's or USP4GG name for any purpose whatsoever.

They have nothing to do whatsoever with any kind of monetary solicitation including the installation of donation boxes or other forms of requests for contributions from the public.

ing officer. Hart, during the board meeting, said that a new honorary staff member will soon be selected.

The Board of Regents has three honorary non-voting members from the Associated Students of NMC, faculty senate, and the staff senate. Occupying the two remaining positions are Lawrence Camacho and Dr. John Griffin. The board has the following voting members: chair Juan Lizama, members Elaine Hocog-Orilla, Malua Peters, Andrew Orsini, William Torres, and Frank Rabauliman.

NMC has 175 total employees as of last week of which 28 are instructional faculty while 37 are non-instructional faculty. The rest are managers and administrative staffers.

Laguatan says "The purpose of the forum is to provide valuable information to foreign workers in the CNMI to help them understand and know their legal rights and understand some of the laws and procedures that may be applicable in helping to solve their immigration problems."

"Many foreign workers have lived and worked in the CNMI for years. Many have U.S. citizen children or other sympathetic situations that should rightfully be considered in their quest for immigration relief. It is good and proper that everyone views them as fellow human beings who legitimately need help. We create a better world when we show love to our fellowmen—regardless of race, nationality, religion, or culture," Laguatan added. (USP4GG)

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION FOR BID
IFB12-OHS-021**

SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 19, 2011 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF
FOUR (4) PORTABLE GENERATORS FOR
THE OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY"**

PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS MAY RETRIEVE A COPY OF THE COMPLETE CONTENTS OF THE INVITATION OF BIDS AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

ALL QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS PROJECT MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO MR. CARL DELA CRUZ, OHS PROCUREMENT OFFICER BY E-MAIL TO ohs.delacruz@gmail.com NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2011.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/S/ MARVIN K. SEMAN
SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR HOMELAND SECURITY

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLON
DIRECTOR, P&S

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN
MARIANA ISLANDS

CITY TRUST BANK	CIVIL ACTION Plaintiff,	NO. 07-0021
V-	SIXTH AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE	
JOSEPH ALDAN ARRIOLA, Defendant.		

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to Order issued by the Court in this matter on October 31, 2008, I will sell, at public auction, the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot 034 L 129, situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 257 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described in the Subdivision of Lot 034 L 63, on DLS Check No. 034 L 21 recorded in the Commonwealth Recorder's Office as File No. 97-1299; and Lot 034 L 130, situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 257 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described in the Subdivision of Lot 034 L 63, on DLS check No. 34 L 21, recorded in the Commonwealth Recorder's Office as File No. 97-1299.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday December 30, 2011, at the hour of 1:30 pm, at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 14th day of November, 2011:

/S/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB 12-DPS/RBS-019**

SUBMISSION/OPENNING DATE: DECEMBER 20, 2011
TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) 3-PASSENGER PERSONAL WATER
CRAFT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY-BOATING
SAFETY SECTION"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THIS IS A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROJECT; AS SUCH, LOCAL PREFERENCE IS NOT AVAILABLE, BECAUSE ITS USE IS PROHIBITED BY FEDERAL LAW GRANTING FUNDING FOR THIS PROJECT.

/S/ RAMON C. MAFNAS
COMMISSIONER, DEPT. OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLON
DIRECTOR, P&S

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Statewide Independent Living Council "Yes I Can!"

P.O. BOX 506296, SAIPAN, MP 95950; TEL: (670) 322-6537/8 FAX: (670) 322-6536
TTY: (670) 322-6449; E-MAIL: nmidir@ovgov.net

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §9910, the public is advised that the Statewide Independent Living Council will hold its FY 2012 First General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, December 06, 2011 at the Caladium Hall, LaoLao Bay & Golf Resort at 9:00am-2:00pm. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

- I. Roll Call
- II. Adoption of Agenda
- III. Review and adoption of September 09, 2011 Minutes
- IV. Reports
 - CLI Director
 - OVR Director
 - Chairman
- V. Old Business
 - Pending Training on Four Core Services
 - SILC By-Laws/Membership Composition
 - Accessible Transportation Issues
- VI. New Business
 - Joint Public Forum with partner agencies
 - Recommendation for CIL activities
 - SILC Congress Update Report
- VII. Consumer Forum
 - TSA Airport Security Presentation
- VIII. Announcements/Miscellaneous
- IX. Adjournment

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend the meeting but require accommodations such as large print or sign language interpreters, are asked to call 322-6537(voice) or 322-6449(TTY). Please contact Elvira Seman (Council Liaison) two days in advance for necessary arrangements.

/s/ Stephen Dutro
SILC Chairperson

Publication of this notice is paid for by federal funds made possible by the United States Department of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

FOR LAND LEASE PAYMENT FOR FY 2011

Public Lands remits \$1M to MPLT

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Lands has remitted \$1 million to the Marianas Public Land Trust, representing the agency's collection from all land lease payments for fiscal year 2011.

MPLT board consultant Bruce McMillan confirmed to *Saipan Tribune* yesterday the

transfer of the amount last Nov. 23 which will primarily be used in investments.

According to DPL Secretary Oscar Babauta the remitted money was the agency's reserve amount for the homestead development projects for the Northern Islands as mandated by Public Law 16-50. Because of the transmitted account, Babauta said this may hamper the

agency's initiatives in resolving homestead projects on Rota and Tinian.

Babauta said this was the first remittance made to the public land trust under his tenure at DPL. He said his predecessor, John DelRosario Jr., also transferred a total of \$4.7 million to MPLT, covering three fiscal years.

During a recent MPLT board meeting, trustees expressed their

frustration on the "unwillingness" of DPL to share financial information. Babauta said what hampered the efforts to provide the requested documents was the completion of financial reports for fiscal years 2003 through 2008 and a financial audit for FY 2008 and 2009.

"We cannot share any official records with MPLT because we're currently in the process of work-

they have. If he has more money, we'll continue. If not, we'll stop."

The mayor said the signing of the agreement is "timely" since the dog registration component of the dog control program is coming to an end.

Flores said the dog registration has been moved to the Saipan Mayor's Office since Nov. 23 and will continue on that venue for another month.

With the dog registration expected to conclude before the year ends, Flores said they can focus their efforts in the construction project followed by the dog eradication component of the dog control program.

Construction of dog shelter to start

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Mayor Donald Flores on Friday said that their office will start the procurement of materials from local vendors for the construction of a proposed dog shelter in Lower Base following the signing of a memorandum agreement with the Northern Marianas Trades Institute.

Flores said in an interview that he signed the agreement Monday last week and their office, in collaboration with the NMTI, will begin initial construction of the dog shelter, the site for which was previously occupied by a small garment manufacturer called Saipan Manufacturers Inc.

"I'm very happy that this day has come for us to start planning on the dog shelter site," he said after his meeting with the seven-member delegation of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot/Western Recruiting Region from San Diego, California led by Brig. Gen. Daniel D. Yoo.

Flores noted, however, that he signed the agreement for the construction of the dog shelter, which will house 36 kennels, and forwarded it to NMTI

founder and president Anthony Pellegrino. The mayor did not disclose specific information about the agreement.

Pellegrino, in a separate phone interview, confirmed that he already signed the agreement but pointed out that he will have to meet again with the mayor to iron out schedule and details.

While he, too, did not divulge any particulars about the agreement, Pellegrino said that the project will be built exclusively by NMTI students who will be working in phases as they will

have to consider the Mayor's Office budget.

Although the NMTI students who will be involved in the project will be paid \$5.05 per hour, Pellegrino emphasized that the school will "not make any money" out of the project since the materials will be purchased by the Mayor's office.

"We're very happy that this is going to be ongoing and a great experience for our young men at NMTI, too," Pellegrino told *Saipan Tribune*. "We'll work on the project with whatever budget

Pellegrino: Arctic Circle Air moving along

The Arctic Circle Air project of businessman Anthony Pellegrino, which intends to jump-start the agriculture industry in the CNMI, is "moving along" as planned.

Pellegrino disclosed yesterday that Arctic Circle Air Capt. Jim Parrish is currently in England making inspections of the two aircraft which are included in the acquisition of Arctic Circle Air, an American airline based in Fair-

banks, Alaska. The acquisition came with a 1,000-lb small aircraft, another 5,500-lb aircraft, and all manuals and licenses.

After inspections are conducted, Pellegrino said that the aircrafts will then be moved to Alaska to finalize changing its ownership to the new Arctic Circle Air which will carry agricultural produce and other cargo between CNMI and Guam.

"We're right on target and we expect the plane to be here about the end of January and start our business about the first week of February," Pellegrino told *Saipan Tribune*.

While the project is moving along, Pellegrino is "sad" knowing that the project was not able to take advantage of the "December rush" which could have allowed local farmers and ranchers to sell more of their produce.

"But we're pushing forward with this project," added Pellegrino.



Pellegrino

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Coastal Resources Management

Caller Box 10007, Springs Plaza, Middle Road, Saipan, MP 96950
Website: www.crm.gov.mp

Tel. (670) 664-8300 • Fax (670) 664-8315



NOTICE OF APPLICATION
December 05, 2011

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CRM OFFICES:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. Galaide Development	11/01/2011 SMS-2011-X-063	Galaide Estate Villas	Chalan Galaide, Navy Hill	Major Siting	Certified Complete (11/16/2011)*
2. Saipan Sea Cruises, Inc.	11/10/2011 SLRm-2011-X-064	Mooring Anchoring	Managaha Island	Lagoon & Reef APC	Under Review
3. Saipan Major Office	11/17/2011 SPIm-2011-X-065	Dog Shelter	Lower Base	Ports & Industrial APC	Approved (12/05/2011)*
4. LauLau Development	11/23/2011 SMS-91-X-79 (2011 Amend)	West Tee House Driving Range	LauLau Resort	Amendment	Approved (12/05/2011)*
5. IP & E Saipan Terminal	11/29/2011 SPIm-2011-X-066	Trenching	Puerto Rico	Ports & Industrial APC	Approved (12/05/2011)*

Publication of the above list is in accordance with CRM Regulations, which require all permit applications to be published in a local newspaper within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the CRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the CRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APC's) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local CRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a CRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the CRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the CRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the CRM Regulations.

ing and finalizing compilation of financial records from 2003 to 2008 [or the closure of books] to get the accurate financial information. Absent those important reports, I will be misleading MPLT on the true financial status of DPL," explained Babauta.

Babauta informed MPLT the transfer of \$1 million to its account in a letter, which is up for board's discussion in this week's meeting.

McMillan said yesterday that they were very glad about the remittance made by DPL and welcomed the secretary's commitment to work with MPLT.

However, he said, without seeing any financial documents from the agency, MPLT cannot quantify how much was truly owed to the public land trust. "We haven't seen any numbers or financial reports so it's really hard to tell how much is really owed to us," added McMillan. According to the MPLT board, the uncollected lease payment from DPL was from fiscal year 2008 through 2011.

Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND
PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC, Division 9, §9910, Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Eloy S. Inos, through the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees/Workers' Compensation Commission/Group Health & Life Insurance Trust Fund, are hereby giving notice that the Board of Trustees will hold its Regular meeting Friday, December 09, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMI Retirement Fund Conference Room, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. PRELIMINARY MATTERS
 - A. Call to Order
 - B. Roll Call
 - C. Adoption of Agenda
 - D. Adoption of Minutes of Meetings
 - 1. August 22, 2011 (Regular)
 - 2. October 28, 2011 (Regular)
 - 3. November 09, 2011 (Emergency)
- II. PUBLIC COMMENTS
- III. REPORTS
 - A. Communications
 - 1. Chairman/Trustees
 - 2. Administrator/Deputy
 - B. Status / Updates
 - 1. Administrative
 - 2. Action Items (Summary)
 - C. Investments
 - D. Accounting
 - 1. NMI Retirement Fund
 - 2. GHLITF
 - 3. WCC
 - E. Board Committees
 - 1. Operations, Personnel & Review
 - 2. Finance & Investment
 - 3. Joint (F&I and OPR)
 - 4. Special
 - F. Internal Auditor
- IV. OLD BUSINESS
 - A. Crisis Management Plan
 - B. Organizational Structure
 - C. MPLT Proposal to Lease Office Space – Update
 - D. NMIRF vs. CUC – Update
 - E. Request For Proposal (RFP)
 - 1. 12-001 – Investment Consultant
 - 2. 12-002 – Actuarial Services
 - 3. 11-005 – Financial Audit
- V. NEW BUSINESS
 - A. Proposed Changes in Regulations
 - 1. Group Health
 - B. GlidePath 2013 Modified / CDARS Transition – Update
 - C. Senate Committee on Retirement
 - D. Senate Legislations
 - 1. Senate Legislative Initiative 17-13, Transfer of certain funds from MPLT to NMIRF
 - 2. Senate Legislative Initiative 17-14, Transfer of title to certain Public Lands to NMIRF
 - 3. Senate Bill 17-96, Transfer of title of certain CNMI Government lands to NMIRF
- VI. LEGAL MATTERS
 - A. Reports
 - 1. Legal / Board Counsel
 - 2. Administrative Hearing Officer
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION
- VIII. MISCELLANEOUS
 - A. Other Related Matters
 - B. Next Meeting
 - C. Adjournment

/s/ SIXTO K. IGISOMAR
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

'Joining Marines great opportunity to start career'

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Exposure to qualifications in joining the military is the biggest challenge in the recruitment efforts of the Marine Corps in the CNMI, according to Brig. Gen. Daniel D. Yoo.

"But once the students understand what our standards are, they strive to meet [these standards]," Yoo said on Friday.

Yoo, commanding general for the Marine Corps Recruit Depot/ Western Recruiting Region led the visiting seven-member delegation from San Diego, California in a brief first visit to Saipan.

The group, which arrived after visiting Guam, had lunch at the El Marino Haven Restaurant, the Saipan restaurant dedicated to the Marines, before paying a courtesy visit to Mayor Donald G. Flores.

Yoo described the process

of joining the military as "very competitive."

"All the students that come into the Marine Corps right now are high school graduates and they're all in the upper categories for their standardized test," said Yoo. "It's very competitive. As you know, everyone else is downsizing as well, too, so there won't be as many opportunities."

Yoo said they are looking for the "best and the brightest." "Saipan has a lot of them. That's why we have somebody here [to coordinate recruitment]," he added.

The general said the purpose of their trip is to visit their recruitment office on island, which is run by Sgt. Gregorio Comeo.

"We have one recruiter here that's part of the larger recruiting substation in Guam. We came out to visit him and see how he's doing. He's new out

here. He's been out here three months now," said Yoo.

According to Yoo, recruitment efforts in the CNMI have "been very good."

"The support from the local community and the leadership of the mayor has been wonderful. With all the Marines that have joined the Marine Corps from Saipan have been very successful, that's why we maintain a recruiter out here all the time," he said.

Joining the Marine Corps, Yoo said, is "a great opportunity to start a career" and get education benefits while serving their country.

"There are opportunities definitely in the Marine Corps for those that are interested and qualified," he said.

Yoo, who was on island for the first time, said Saipan is a "wonderful" and "beautiful" island where people are "very,

very kind."

"For us Marines, this is really hallow ground because of 1944 and the major camp we had here and we lost a lot of our predecessors here," he added.

Mayor Flores, for his part, said he supports recruitment efforts of the Marine Corps here in the CNMI.

"The Marines are really concentrating on recruiting our young men and women here and they should. They should look attentively in trying to join the military," he said.

During Friday's meeting, Flores and Yoo exchanged gifts and souvenir items. The group went back to the mainland on Saturday.

For more information about joining the Marine Corps, visit their office located next to Noni Juice in Ladera Building along Beach Road or call 235-1881 or 82.



FAMILY LITERACY

Seven Adult Basic Education students successfully completed the Motheread Family Literacy Program and were presented their completion certificates on Saturday at the San Antonio Manhoben Center. Pictured from left are Motheread coordinator Viola S. Deleon Guerrero, program graduates Bermihna Higgins, Frankie Limes, Dane Lisua, Sawad Henderson, Christina Higgin, Coralynn Taitano and Jose Duenas, and assistant Motheread coordinator Bryan Manabat. The Northern Marianas Humanities Council thanks ABE Instructor Virgilio Abueme for making the necessary arrangements for his students to complete this valuable family literacy program.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

JUDGE STANDS PAT ON EARLIER RULING

Motion to dismiss case vs. co-owner of defunct remittance center denied anew

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood has stood pat on her earlier decision that denied a motion to dismiss a criminal case filed against a co-owner of a defunct remittance center who was indicted for alleged conspiracy to defraud a Philippine bank.

In denying defendant Haydn L. Villegas' motion for reconsideration, Tydingco-Gatewood ruled that she did not commit a clear error in applying the law.

"Essentially, defendant is merely asking the court to re-

think what it has already thought through, and that is not a proper justification for reconsideration," the judge pointed out.

Tydingco-Gatewood also rejected Villegas' argument that the court improperly invaded the province of the jury.

The judge said her findings in her order denying the motion to dismiss were for purposes of deciding the motion.

"Defendant will still have an opportunity to argue his theory that the last overt act was outside the scope of the statute of limitations to the jury at trial,"

Tydingco-Gatewood said.

Villegas was the co-owner of the defunct Philippine Express Remittance who allegedly defrauded the Philippine National Bank of about \$109,855. He pleaded not guilty to the charge of conspiracy to commit wire fraud.

Villegas, through counsel G. Anthony Long, moved to dismiss the case, arguing that the charges were untimely filed.

Tydingco-Gatewood denied the motion. She determined that Villegas' last overt act occurred on Jan. 17, 2007, and that the

U.S. government opposed the motion. The prosecution argues that the defendant fails to demonstrate that the court clearly erred in applying the law and fails to present arguments that could have been raised in the initial briefings.

The judge agreed with the prosecution. (Ferdie de la Torre)

Zoning Office cuts waiting time for processing home business licenses

Applicants of home business licenses no longer have to worry waiting for a long period of time before obtaining their actual license as the Zoning Office has made the process easier as part of its streamlining efforts.

Acting administrator Therese T. Ogumoro said yesterday that applicants of home business licenses can now get their

license as long as they submit their filled out application form together with all requirements for the application.

Ogumoro said applicants can affix their signature on the application and can get their license right away.

She said they also revised the zoning inquiry form and made it "easier to read" and "straight

The acting administrator

grand jury returned the indictment on Dec. 16, 2010, which was within five years of the last overt act.

Thus, the judge said, the charge of conspiracy is not barred by the statute of limitations.

Villegas moved the court to reconsider its ruling.

Long argued that reconsideration is proper as the court erred in ruling that the indictment alleges a timely offense.

The U.S. government opposed the motion. The prosecution argues that the defendant fails to demonstrate that the court clearly erred in applying the law and fails to present arguments that could have been raised in the initial briefings.

The judge agreed with the prosecution. (Ferdie de la Torre)

described the Zoning Office's streamlining efforts as "an ongoing process."

"We continuously see ways in which we need to streamline. We're also looking at simple procedures to make our major site plans and conditional use applications very simple and easy to understand," added Ogumoro. (Clarissa V. David)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Dec. 6, 2000

CPA eyes establishment of emergency fund

The Commonwealth Ports Authority is seeking to establish an Operation Emergency Fund with an initial deposit of about \$312,000 to finance contingency needs at both the airport and seaport divisions. Board Chair Roman S. Palacios told an interview that CPA management is initially requesting for \$249,880 in supplemental funds for the airport, and an additional \$62,000 for emergency needs at the harbor. Mr. Palacios said the idea behind the proposed creation of an Operation Emergency Fund is to make the money available whenever the immediate need arises, without necessarily calling the Board of Directors for a meeting which may be time-consuming.

Home care provider seeks govt support

Marianas Health Services, a locally-owned home care-giving agency, organized yesterday a dialogue between Legislature, health, and government officials in efforts to draw community support and promote public awareness on the concept of "home care" as an equally vital aspect of health care. Guam-based MHS vice president and clinical director Ruth Gurusamy appealed to local leaders not to rule out home care in the Legislature's health care policy making discussions and decisions, citing CNMI's increasing need for the services. "What we would like is support from our policy makers in the CNMI, that anytime health care services are discussed, please consider home care as part of it. When you make decisions about health care access for Commonwealth residents, please consider home care as an option," Ms. Gurusamy told officials over a Health Care Legislative breakfast at the Royal Restaurant in Garapan yesterday.

Dec. 6, 2001

Queens' referral claims balloon to \$.5M

The money owed by the CNMI government's insurance arm to Hawaii-based Queens Medical Center has ballooned to an estimated half-a-million dollars, eliciting a howl of protest from the center. Based on documents obtained by Saipan Tribune, medical claims owed by Group Health and Life Insurance Co. to the Queens Medical Center covering the period from 2000 to 2001 have now reached nearly \$500,000. Queens said the owed amount has grown because Group Health has failed to live up to its promise to pay the center a fixed amount that has previously been agreed upon between the two parties.

Nat'l board certifies 33 NMI airport firefighters

The National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications has certified 33 Commonwealth firefighters, who passed the firefighting standards set by the United States government. In a letter to the Commonwealth Ports Authority Airport and Rescue Firefighting Unit, NBFSPQ Secretary to the Board Anthony R. O'Neill said the board has certified 33 ARFF personnel from Saipan, Tinian and Rota. O'Neil said the names of the 22 CPA personnel—26 from Saipan, three from Tinian and four from Rota—were also entered to the National Registry of Certified Fire Service Personnel. The 33 Northern Marianas ARFF personnel were accorded the National Certification Level as airport firefighters in accordance with the standards set by the NBFSPQ.

Dec. 6, 2002

Zoning eyed to protect groundwater

The technical workgroup that seeks to solve the contamination problem of Saipan's groundwater has come up with a priority list on what should be focused on to protect groundwater in the entire CNMI. Essentially, the workgroup has come up with a plan to implement zoning in the Commonwealth to protect groundwater, said workgroup head David Schmidt, an environmental scientist at the Division of Environmental Quality. "There is currently no effective strategic plan in place to manage and protect CNMI groundwater resources from contamination," Schmidt said. "The desired state is the existence of a functional CNMI groundwater protection strategy that government agencies, the business community and the general public understand, support and work collaboratively to implement."

PCB-laced soil treatment completed soon

Treatment of PCB-contaminated soil in Tanapag is nearing completion, as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers disclosed that its contractor has so far treated over 30,000 tons of soil. A visiting Army Corps technical expert from the Omaha District in Nebraska estimates that the Environmental Chemical Corporation will have to treat only about 3,000 tons of soil.

Japanese actor ties knot in blissful island setting

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan hosted the wedding ceremony and reception for one of the bright talents handled by talent manager and honorary CNMI tourism ambassador Chiaki Nagumo.

Japanese actor Arthur Kuroda tied the knot with Shiho Miyata in a private ceremony at Hyatt Regency Saipan's White Sands Chapel on a drizzly Sunday afternoon.

Born in Feb. 1, 1961 in San Francisco, Kuroda began his acting career at the age of 21 when he made his debut in the television drama "Meiken Goroo no Bouken Viva! Canada." Since then, Kuroda acted in various television shows and movies.

Kuroda, 50, looked dashing and debonair in his silver suit complemented by a light pink tie while Miyata looked stunning and majestic in her white flowing gown as the two gracefully walked down the aisle bedecked with white roses against a backdrop of the island's serene waters.

The ceremony, officiated by Pastor Manuel Cabaluna and planned by Watabe Wedding, was attended by a few family members and friends as

well as community figures that included Japan Consul Tsutomu Higuchi, Mayor Donald and wife Cecilia Flores, and Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio.

Crew members of TBS, a major television station in Japan, were on Saipan to document the couple's marital bliss.

Upon their exchange of vows, the newlyweds were greeted with soft cheers from well-wishers who joined them in celebrating the occasion by showering them with flower petals.

Tenorio thanked Mr. Nagumo who was "very instrumental" in having the Japanese couple exchange their wedding vows on Saipan.

"We're very happy that he was able to bring the couple out to have their wedding here on Saipan," Tenorio told *Saipan Tribune*.

The managing director said MVA is working closely with individuals and establishments that can bring the kind of attention that would promote CNMI as a wedding destination, including Watabe Wedding which Tenorio said has a base of people who want to marry offshore.

"This is one way to reach into that... CNMI is an option," added Tenorio.



Japanese actor Arthur Kuroda smiles for the camera as he clinks his champagne glass with his wife, Shiho Miyata.

CLARISSA V. DAVID



PHOTOS BY CLARISSA V. DAVID



The couple's wedding entourage included Japan Consul Tsutomu Higuchi, Saipan Mayor Donald Flores and wife Cecilia, and Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio.



The newlyweds have their champagne toast at the Hyatt garden.

Right, Japanese actor Arthur Kuroda and his wife, Shiho Miyata, ring the bell after their wedding ceremony at Hyatt Regency Saipan's White Sands Chapel.



Family and friends celebrate the momentous occasion with the couple.



The bride and the groom walk down the aisle to the White Sands Chapel at Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

US should lead the way to halt climate change

The U.N. Climate Summit opened over the weekend in Durban, South Africa, amid still more evidence of dangerous changes in extreme weather patterns. The drought in Texas and across the southern United States, along with record flooding in parts of Africa and Asia, are signs of an ominous trend supported by recent reports based on scientific data:

- Thirteen of the world's hottest years on record have all occurred in the last 15 years. As if to put an exclamation point on this alarming pattern, this year was also the hottest ever to coincide with the cooling effect of La Niña, the weather system in the Pacific that is supposed to reduce global temperatures.
- This year was the 10th hottest year since 1850, when accurate measurements began. This phenomenon brought higher temperatures all over the globe. In northern Russia, October temperatures were 7 degrees above average. Next-door Finland had the hottest summer in 200 years.
- Closer to home, sea ice in the Arctic shrank to its second lowest surface area after 2007, with measurements at record levels of thin ice. In the coming weeks, another scientific report is expected to declare that the risk posed by undeniably increasing levels in the ocean raises the prospect of destroying low-lying coastal areas of the Northern Hemisphere—including parts of Florida.

These findings were disclosed by credible, science-based groups, including the World Meteorological Organization and Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in separate but complementary reports that support what most climate experts have been saying for decades: The world is warming, and the warming is due to the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere that can be attributed to human activity and exploding carbon levels.

Climate skeptics will doubtless brush this aside as the work of forces that want to impose government controls on carbon emissions and every conceivable human activity that affects the air we breathe, but it's harder to brush aside the conversion of one of the most prominent skeptics in academia, Richard Muller, a respected physicist at UC-Berkeley.

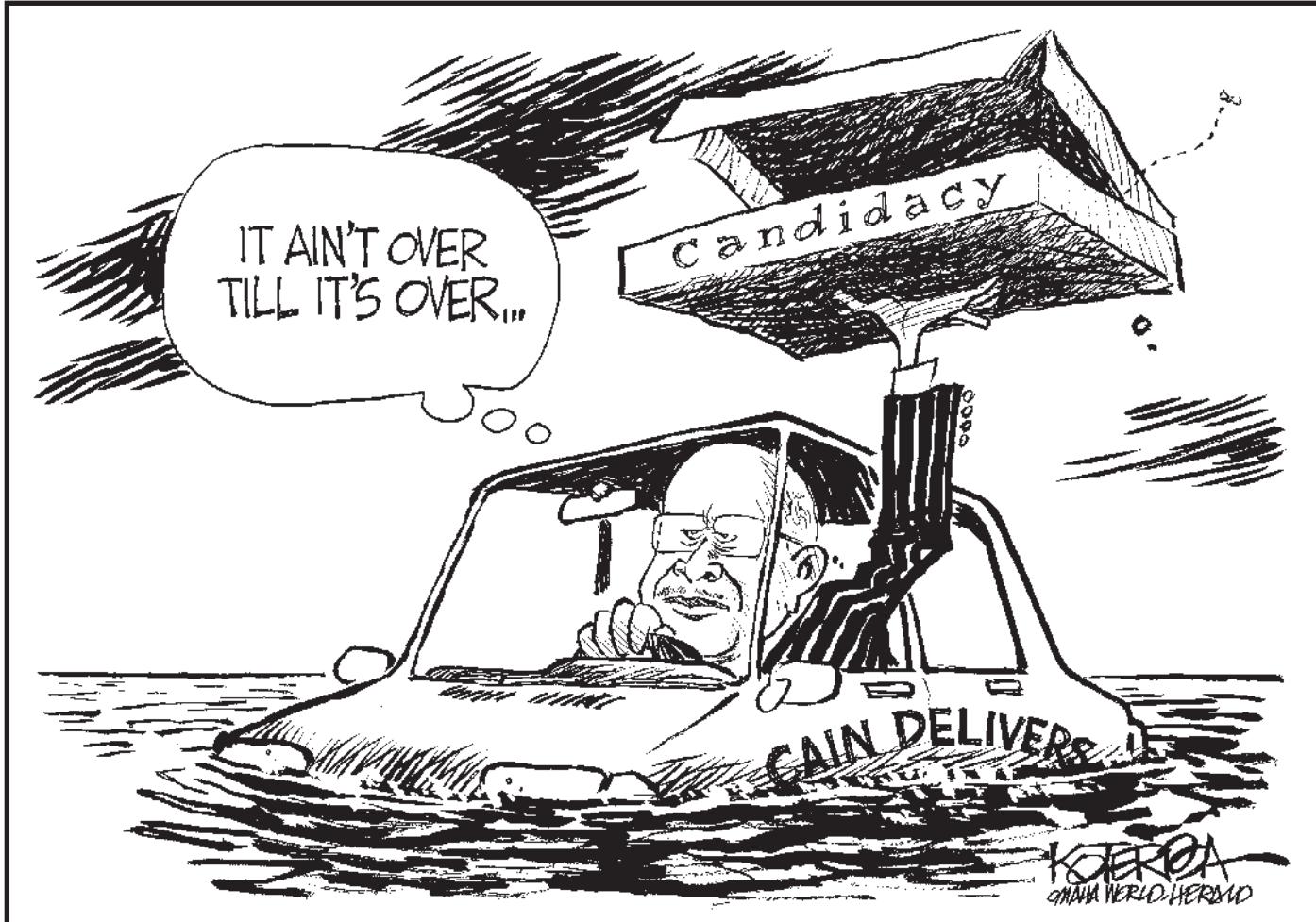
"Global warming is real," he wrote in The Wall Street Journal last October. Mr. Muller said the findings of his own research team confirmed the accepted conventional wisdom that he and others once scorned as the product of "activist frenzy" within the scientific community.

All of this lends a new level of urgency to the meeting in Durban, where politics and ideology threaten to obstruct progress toward concerted action by the world community to halt, or even reverse, the global warming trend. Organizations like the Sierra Club and the Union of Concerned Scientists say the Obama administration has failed to live up to the president's promise as a candidate to lead the way to decisive action on climate change.

Specifically, the administration has been dragging its feet on the issue of what to do with the Kyoto Treaty—which focuses on emission reductions—when it expires next year. Instead of holding off until 2020 before any new treaty can take effect, as the administration has proposed, it should work to achieve consensus to strengthen the treaty before any more damage is done.

The point is rapidly approaching, scientists say, when global warming becomes irreversible. Action should be taken today to save the world of a devastating tomorrow.

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A message for retirees

» What happens to the retiree's Group Health and Life Insurance plan when the Fund goes broke?

If you are a retiree who has paid into the government's Group Health and Life Insurance plan (GHLI) you must be aware that your health, the quality of your life and ability to function as your future retirement years unfold depends greatly upon the government's acknowledgment and acceptance of its continued responsibility to honor the promise it made to you when you first started paying into the program. Now, in the September of your years as your earning capacity has probably declined, that promise—which was a contract to continue supporting your participation in the GHLI program, which was initially offered to you when becoming a government employee—may soon also be in jeopardy. It was an implied promise that the GHLI program would be there for those who continued participating as time passed and they aged.

The problem now concerns the matter of future automatic payment deductions for insurance premiums from pension checks when the day arrives when those payments are no longer made once the Retirement Fund collapses as experts now predict will occur in about two years or around the year 2013 or 14.

It cannot be ignored that prior to the NMI government's closure of the Retirement Fund's defined benefit plan to new members, the policy of offering NMI employees the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the government-sponsored Group Health and Life Insurance plan also had an unintended effect as it served to dissuade, in some measure, some—if not most—newly hired employees from seeking an alternative source for such policies other than that offered by the NMI government. By the very act of making such a program available makes the NMI somewhat culpable and thus worthy of blame in the potential for causing serious harm in the future to the health and well-being of its retired seniors should it let this program fail along with the Fund. While it's too soon to tell, this might be the indictment should the government's supported GHLI plan be permitted to collapse along with the Retirement Fund.

Thus, as can be seen for those currently retired, there is much more at stake for loss than one's pension. The possibility exists that the Group Health and Life Insurance plan may also end.

By virtue of having made the GHLI offer, and thus available in the first place, such an enticing "carrot" served to encourage employees to participate in the NMI sponsored plan and in so doing discouraged their selection of some other alternative, viable, private plan.

Once the Fund collapses—as many have projected will occur in a couple years—this disaster has the potential of carrying along with it the GHLI plan down the drain as well unless the NMI government acts in a positive manner to keep this part of its promise.

If you are retired and have been reading and hearing about the dire condition of the Fund's future financial continued viability

By WILLIAM H. STEWART

Special to the Saipan Tribune

William H. Stewart is an economist, historian, and military cartographer.



and the very real possibility of it becoming bankrupt in about two years, then you should already be aware of the future effect on your pension. But there are other related difficulties many members will face that doesn't appear to have been given too much contingency planning by the central government or Fund officials for continued participation of the GHLI or something similar; I haven't heard anything about it.

If you have paid into these programs for many years your loss could be substantial, not only in the lost money paid out in premiums but also because of your advanced age as you probably won't be able to purchase replacement policies except at exorbitantly high cost—if at all—and probably not at all if you have a pre-existing illness.

Members who have paid insurance premiums for years will lose their coverage unless there is an alternate method for making premium payments other than by way of payroll deductions, which will no longer be possible with a bankrupt Fund.

Considering that coverage for both programs will probably not be transferable to just any firm of one's choice or preference—and considering that the years of previous payments will count for nothing when new coverage is arranged by the individual member—I further doubt if any firm with experience will accept NMI government issued IOU's as a promise for future payment even if presumably backed by the full faith and credit of the NMI. It is worth remembering there have been times when the government didn't pay its matching share and the "shortfall" had to be paid by the Fund. Without a functioning Fund there would be no agency available to step up and pay the government's contractual matching contribution.

Most people are aware that group coverage is quite a bit less expensive than that arranged by individuals and, in the case of life insurance, the government has been paying part of the cost of retiree's premiums so one can probably expect that program will be dropped and the cost of individually purchased life insurance will be more than double what it is now, with even much less coverage for the price.

With respect to medical and health insurance—as is always true—the matter of pre-existing illnesses becomes a factor in applying for coverage. Particularly for those with an existing condition such as diabetes, high blood pressure, a heart condition, emphysema, kidney problems, cancer, high cholesterol (LDL), HIV, Lupus Vulgaris, Lytigo and Bodig, Alzheimer's, Parkinson, Hansen, or any one of the numerous unseen ravenous vultures of the air and

See RETIREES on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The American century: That was then

If you want a gauge of an America on the downward slope, you could look at the recent poll commissioned by the newspaper the Hill, in which a startling 69 percent of respondents said they considered the country to be in decline. Or you could just consider the soaring language of this season's presidential candidates. Mitt Romney, in a recent Republican debate on foreign policy, was typical, insisting that "this century must be an American century" in which "America leads the free world and the free world leads the entire world."

President Obama too is prone to the overheated language of American exceptionalism, announcing frequently his intention to ensure that the 21st century is "another American century."

As a 67-year-old, I grew up in a post-World War II era that, by any measure, was the height of the first American century. As much of the rest of the developed world struggled to rebuild devastated cities, the United States couldn't have been more exceptional, a one-of-a-kind country in producing the big-ticket items both of peace and of war, often from the same corporations.

Back then, there was no need for presidents or presidential candidates to get up and repetitively reassure the American people of just how exceptional we were. It was too obvious to state. After all, when you've really got it, you don't have to flaunt it.

So, the next time you hear any politician insisting that this country is American century-style exceptional, think of it as a kind of secret confession that we aren't. These days, you can feel the uncomfortably defensive snarl (or whine) that lurks in the insistence that our country isn't just another powerful nation in political gridlock and economic trouble.

Think here, if you will, of Rambo's muscles, which were in their own way as much a confession of insecurity as Romney's talk of exceptionalism. Back in the day, the screen western or war hero—Gary Cooper or John Wayne—might be strong and silent, but brute physique was the least of his attributes. He wasn't overmuscular or cartoonishly outsized. As a man of that true American century moment, he didn't have to go out of his way to emphasize his hero-hood and his physical power.

Rambo arrived on-screen in the post-Vietnam War years as a creature of American defeat. It was a time when strong and silent wasn't convincing enough anymore, when a literal arms race seemed necessary, when the peccs of American power needed to be overblown to be overshadowed.

Romney and crew are, verbally speaking, the Rambos of this 21st century American moment. And their version of nonstop exceptionalism fits well with another strange repetitive feature of the present landscape: the exaltation of the American soldier as a hero of heroes, an exemplar for the nation.

Much of this would have rung weirdly indeed to the ears of Americans in my childhood. They had their own set of outsized fears, but

RETIREEs

From Page 10

body that can strike one down with little warning and otherwise be deemed prohibited from medical or life insurance coverage. I would imagine there might be a whole lot of retirees with one or more of the above conditions.

When the Fund runs out of money to pay pensions, those retired government employees who did not have the option of contributing to the national Social Security "safety net" will either be without income or they will need to rely on other sources—but most will probably suffer by experiencing much reduced income and a diminished standard of living. This occurring at a time when inflation will likely be rampant and more severe as the future unfolds.

Section 606 of the Covenant addressed the application of the U.S. Social Security system to the NMI but the government elected to opt out in favor of its own retirement plan. For those who haven't paid into Social Security for the required 40 quarters (10 years), such people will not be eligible for monthly pension payments from Social Security.

Because the NMI government decided not to participate in the U.S. Social Security system and instead formed its own retirement system, many retirees are now particularly vulnerable once their promised retirement collapses. Therefore, when the Fund runs out of money after having cashed in its remaining and ever declining investment base to pay pensions, look for the Group Health and Life Insurance programs to be negatively impacted as well.

I can see where the matter can become a big problem for some people without medical coverage and eventually a problem for CHC and—by extension—the U.S. taxpayer. If you are a retiree, don't wait until 5 minutes to midnight to express your concern about this matter to your representative.

they still lived in a country with a citizen army that a draft ensured just about everyone took part in. Like mine, most families then had at least one WW II vet. And yet no one talked about greatest generations or American heroes or, like President Obama and George W. Bush before him, "the finest fighting force in the world" (or "that the world has ever known"). The soldier was simply an American.

Now, in the world of the all-volunteer Army, with the U.S. permanently, if remarkably unsuccessfully, at war around the world, the military largely exists in a separate sphere, with many Americans having no direct link to the wars being fought in their name and the soldiers who are fighting them.

Yet today, supporting the troops (or "America's warriors," as they are now often called) has become a near-religious duty. This recurrent insistence on their need for support should, like Romney's exceptionalism, be viewed as another kind of secret admission.

After all, the greatest mistake of our era was undoubtedly this: When the Soviet Union suddenly disappeared in 1991, our leaders imagined that they had achieved a kind of American victory never before seen. Where, for centuries, there had been two or more great-power rivals, there was now only the sole superpower (or even hy-

perpower) of planet Earth, with no significant threat anywhere.

To some, it looked as if this were, by definition, a second post-WW II moment of American exceptionalism. Mistaking military might for global power, they didn't notice that the mightier superpower of the Cold War was also heading slowly downhill in a cloud of self-congratulation. The rest of this grim story we are now living.

Long gone is that American moment and the "century" that went with it. Decline is upon us, and every assurance that it isn't only serves, however subliminally, to reinforce that reality. At whatever pace, our "warriors" and "heroes" are coming home to a distinctly unhappy, unheroic and insecure country, lacking in jobs. In the meantime, our leaders doth protest too much.

Letters to the Editor

My response

This is in response to Paul Beebe's four-page letter titled "Putting the blame where it belongs." Let me tell you about myself. I have two bachelor degrees, one of which is a BA in business with a minor in economics. This background has helped me obtain audiences with the POTUS, several members of Congress, governors and local state representatives, not only in the United States but in three other countries as well. I think I know a little about economics and how local and national economies work. I also have written several books that are available on Amazon.com, one of which is a book on how to build personal wealth and become successful. With that said, I hardly doubt that I have blinders on when it comes to economics.

I have stated quite clearly, in the past, that products should be made on island in order for the CNMI to prosper. Not everything can be made in the CNMI but numerous items can. This will create jobs and improve the economy. This is called wealth building. If you understand economics, you would understand that money needs to be spent locally if the local economy is to remain strong. Let me show a case study. In 1974, the Laurel-Langley agreement was repealed in the Philippines. Many U.S. businesses had to sell a majority share to local nationals. I'm all for this, except the president of the Philippines decided to become everyone's partner. The president and his cronies then began pulling money out of the Philippines at an alarming rate. The Philippines, in 1985, had no money to pay its national debt payments or to pay its own budget. Almost all the money was stolen. The IMF came in and tried to resolve this.

To put it on a smaller scale, when a female working at Louis Vuitton in Galleria sends half her money to her family off-island, that money now isn't spent locally. This means that local stores cannot profit, they cannot hire new employees or give pay raises, and they cannot pay taxes. No alien conspiracy, as you allege, just plain economics. When money is spent locally, the money trickles around to each person and eventually to the government. You don't need surveys, polls, or elections, just an understanding of economics. If you never studied it, you will never understand it.

I have never blamed any alien for the CNMI budget woes. I said that by sending money overseas, the CNMI government cannot generate tax revenue and therefore the government doesn't have any income. In Korea if anyone sends more than \$10,000 overseas, accumulated during the entire year and kept track of, that person pays tax on that money. They do it to prevent money from leaving the country and thus hurting the economy.

Force retirees to move back here? How about this? You move back here first and work for \$5.05 an hour. Be an example. Show the locals that you like this island and you accept those wages. That is what is needed—someone to do it first. Hawaii's mess was largely due to the Japanese buying up land and driving up land values to a million dollars an acre. The locals were priced out of the market. Japan's bubble burst in the 1980s and it hurt Hawaii's economy. That is why Article 12 should stay intact.

The only racism I heard of was you calling Gov. Fitial "Uncle Ben," which is a derogatory term used in the United States. It's insulting and shows immaturity. I have never used any term to degrade any person, culture, and/or religion. I have stated that wages are low because the same people who destroyed the economy with

the garment factories are the same people paying \$5 an hour. Many locals won't take the \$5 an hour job because it's degrading. I won't either. The minimum wage should be \$10 an hour.

If aliens are related to U.S. citizens they should be protected under U.S. laws until they get their green cards. I got my ex-wife's green card within six months of being married. I didn't wait 20 years. And yes, I have gone through hassles with immigration several times and that's why I moved to this beautiful island in order that I could be with my fiancée without the hassle of going through the immigration process again. If immigration tried to screw with my family I would just move to her country, or take a job in another country, and then go from there. I have done it before and I will do it again.

What do you think, if all aliens were to leave that all jobs will disappear the same day, the entire island chain would cease to move or no one would know what to do? One shipping company moved from here to Washington State, maybe you know that company. Life went on. The problems facing the CNMI were not created by the U.S. government as you stated. They were created by the garment factories and one Sen. Al Franken, who tried to politicize the conditions the CWs faced instead of trying to help improve their status. Where is he now? What do you think his motive was? Hint—to embarrass the other party. Thanks Al.

Homeland Security was started because of 9-11. Do you remember that? President George Bush and Adolph Hitler do not belong in the same sentence. Bush reacted in ways to help save Americans from terrorist attacks. President Franklin Roosevelt, on the other hand, rounded up U.S. citizens (Japanese, Italian, and German descent) and placed them in prison camps just because of their ethnicity. Who was closer to Hitler? Hint—the one on the coin.

Calling local politicians inept? They were freely elected because the God-fearing people of the CNMI believed in them. By saying there are inept politicians in this government is like saying the voters are inept because they voted for them. I have never told anyone on this island who they should vote for. Why don't you run for office here and fix the problems. You seem to know everything.

To prove my last point about aliens going on the government dole, one writer recently wrote that it wouldn't be fair if people lose their food stamps for their children if they had to leave the CNMI. I don't need any hard facts, her letter states it all.

Keith Brooks
Dandan, Saipan

No receipts

I was on Saipan this past weekend to visit with families. I know and understand what Saipan is going through economically. While there I shopped at several mom and pop stores. Some stores didn't provide any receipts and those that did gave me an unreadable receipt. The cashier (a Chinese woman at a Kagman store near Kagman High School) said, "Oh, it just broke." How are these stores being regulated taxwise? I think the CNMI is losing thousands if not millions of dollars due to this type of activities from these mom and pop stores. Does the CNMI have personnel to monitor and do the check and balances on this? I think every little bit will help out the CNMI.

Joe Tenorio
Barrigada, Guam



Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

▲86° ▾76°

▲87° ▾76°

▲87° ▾76°

▲87° ▾76°

▲87° ▾76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲85 ▾78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲87 ▾76
Yap	Showers	▲88 ▾77
Chuuk	Showers	▲85 ▾78
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▾76
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲85 ▾76
Majuro	Showers	▲84 ▾78

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲67 ▾58
Beijing	Snow	▲39 ▾22
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲75 ▾66
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲81 ▾71
London	Partly	▲49 ▾42
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲62 ▾37
Manila	Thundershowers	▲84 ▾76
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲80 ▾51
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲80 ▾70
New York	Showers	▲58 ▾42
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲57 ▾47
Paris	Showers	▲50 ▾44
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲55 ▾43
Rome	Sunny	▲55 ▾43
Salem	Partly Cloudy	▲45 ▾31
San Francisco	Sunny	▲59 ▾45
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲45 ▾35
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	▲53 ▾44
Washington, DC	Showers	▲59 ▾45

Tides

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:30 AM	5:46 PM	Today	2:31 PM	2:37 AM
Wednesday	6:30 AM	5:46 PM	Wednesday	3:11 PM	3:25 AM
Thursday	6:31 AM	5:46 PM	Thursday	3:54 PM	4:14 AM
Friday	6:31 AM	5:47 PM	Friday	4:40 PM	5:05 AM
Saturday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM	Friday	5:30 PM	5:57 AM

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Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.

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Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.

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Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 5K: FlyGuam; 3U: Sichuan Airlines; C2: China Southern; CO: Continental; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 6, 2011

DEPARTURES

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

C05062 2:10am 2:40am 1, 5

SAIPAN (SPN)-ROTA (ROP)

C05064 4:15am 4:50am 1, 5

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

C05070 4:15am 5:45am 1, 5 via ROP

C05070 4:35am 5:25am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7

C05068 8:25am 9:15am Daily

C05074 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7

C05076 3:10pm 4:00pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

C05078 6:50pm 7:40pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

C05078 7:00pm 7:50pm 3, 6

C05072 9:55pm 10:45pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

C05072 10:05pm 10:55pm 3, 6

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

C05064 5:15am 5:45am 1, 5

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN (SPN)

C05062 3:10am 3:45am 1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

C05062 2:10am 3:45am 1, 5 via ROP

C05069 2:45am 3:35am 2, 3, 4, 6, 7

C05071 7:00am 7:50am Daily

C05073 10:05am 10:55am 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

C05075 1:40pm 2:30pm 1, 4, 5, 7

C05077 5:30pm 6:20pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

C05077 5:40pm 6:30pm 3, 6

C05079 8:35pm 9:25pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 7

C05079 8:45pm 9:35pm 3, 6

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287 6:00am 8:35am Daily

DL297 4:35pm 7:20pm Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

02606 2:10am 6:00am 1

02606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

02604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

02608 3:35am 7:05am 4, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

02606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN

02606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN

C05070/191 4:35am 9:45am 3, 6 via GUM

DL287/173 6:00am 10:25pm Daily via NRT

C05068/183 8:25am 9:25pm 2, 5 via GUM

C05068/183 8:25am 9:40pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

C05076/183 3

Business

Postal cuts to slow delivery of first-class mail

WASHINGTON (AP)—Facing bankruptcy, the U.S. Postal Service is pushing ahead with unprecedented cuts to first-class mail next spring that will slow delivery and, for the first time in 40 years, eliminate the chance for stamped letters to arrive the next day.

The estimated \$3 billion in reductions, to be announced in broader detail on Monday, are part of a wide-ranging effort by the cash-strapped Postal Service to quickly trim costs, seeing no immediate help from Congress.

The changes would provide short-term relief, but ultimately could prove counterproductive, pushing more of America's business onto the Internet. They could slow everything from check payments to Netflix's DVDs-by-mail, add costs to mail-order prescription drugs, and threaten the existence of newspapers and time-sensitive magazines delivered by postal carrier to far-flung suburban and rural communities.

That birthday card mailed first-class to Mom also could arrive a day or two late, if people don't plan ahead.

"It's a potentially major change, but I don't think consumers are focused on it and it won't register until the service goes away," said Jim Corri-

Online sales reach \$6B in week after Thanksgiving

NEW YORK (AP)—U.S. shoppers are still spending heavily online after a record-busting "Cyber Monday," research firm comScore Inc. said Sunday.

The firm, which tracks Web use, found shoppers spent nearly \$6 billion online on Monday through Friday last week, a record.

On Cyber Monday itself, sales reached \$1.25 billion, the biggest online shopping day in history. Online sales on Tuesday and Wednesday also broke \$1 billion.

Cyber Monday sales topped \$1 billion for the first time last year.

ComScore says online sales



In this Sept. 15, 2011, file photo Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe speaks at a news conference on changes to the Postal Service that could potentially save as much as \$3 billion in Washington.

dore, analyst with S&P Capital IQ, who tracks the shipping industry. "Over time, to the extent the customer service experience gets worse, it will only increase the shift away from mail to alternatives. There's almost nothing you can't do online that you can do by mail."

The cuts, now being finalized, would close roughly 250 of the nearly 500 mail processing centers across the country as early

as next March. Because the consolidations typically would lengthen the distance mail travels from post office to processing center, the agency also would lower delivery standards for first-class mail that have been in place since 1971.

Currently, first-class mail is supposed to be delivered to homes and businesses within the continental U.S. in one day to three days. That will lengthen to two days to three days, meaning

tive," said comScore chairman Gian Fulgoni in a statement.

Online shopping accounts for between 8 and 10 percent of overall holiday spending, by various estimates. ComScore's spending figures exclude travel, auctions and large corporate purchases.

Spending on items including clothing, general merchandise, toys and electronics and in department stores, rose 4.7 percent to \$125 billion in the Oct. 30 to Nov. 26 period, according to MasterCard Advisor's SpendingPulse. That includes online buying and spending in physical stores.

mailers no longer could expect next-day delivery in surrounding communities. Periodicals could take between two days and nine days.

About 42 percent of first-class mail is now delivered the following day. An additional 27 percent arrives in two days, about 31 percent in three days

and less than 1 percent in four days to five days. Following the change next spring, about 51 percent of all first-class mail is expected to arrive in two days, with most of the remainder delivered in three days.

default this month on a \$5.5 billion annual payment to the Treasury for retiree health benefits. It is projected to have a record loss of \$14.1 billion next year amid steady declines in first-class mail volume.

Donahoe has said the agency must make cuts of \$20 billion by 2015 to be profitable.

It already has announced a 1-cent increase in first-class mail to 45 cents beginning Jan. 22.

"We have a business model that is failing. You can't continue to run red ink and not make changes," Donahoe said. "We know our business, and we listen to our customers. Customers are looking for affordable and consistent mail service, and they do not want us to take tax money."

Expressing urgency to reduce costs, Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe said in an interview that the agency has to act while waiting for Congress to grant it authority to reduce delivery to five days a week, raise stamp prices and reduce health care and other labor costs.

The Postal Service, an independent agency of government, does not receive tax money, but is subject to congressional control on large aspects of its operations. The changes in first-class mail delivery can go into place without permission from Congress.

After five years in the red, the post office faces imminent

Pivotal week for Europe's leaders and fate of euro

BRUSSELS (AP)—Europe's government-debt crisis, which has dragged on for more than two years, is entering a pivotal week, as leaders across the continent converge to prevent a collapse of the euro and a global financial panic that could result.

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Expectations are rising that Friday's summit of leaders of the 27 countries in the European Union will yield a breakthrough. An agreement on tighter integration of the 17 EU countries that use the euro—especially on budget matters—would be seen as a crucial first step. That could trigger further emergency aid from the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund or some combination, analysts say.

The coming days "will decide if the euro will survive or not," Emma Marcegaglia, the head of Italy's industrial lobby, Confindustria, said Sunday.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, European Central Bank Chief Mario Draghi and even U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner will star in a 5-day financial drama leading up to the summit.

If the summit is a failure, Sarkozy warned last week, "the world will not wait for Europe."

Sarkozy and Merkel meet in Paris on Monday to unveil a proposal for closer political and economic ties between the

17 euro countries. While the leaders differ on some of the details, their cooperation has been so tight they have come to be known by a single name—"Merkozy."

The two agree overall on the need for tougher, enforceable rules that would prevent governments from spending or borrowing too much—and on certain penalties for persistent violators.

"Where we today have agreements, we need in the future to have legally binding regulations," Merkel said Friday.

Merkel wants to change the basic EU treaty to reflect the tougher rules on euro countries and make them enforceable. Even if there is general agreement on Friday, actually putting new rules in place through treaty changes could take more than a year. And many economists fear the new rules alone would not be enough to halt the rise in Europe's borrowing costs.

The hope is that a firm expression of intent, however, would reassure the ECB, so that it can make stronger efforts in the short term. That would give governments time to get their finances under better control and make economic reforms that would improve growth.

The urgency has been heightened in recent weeks as Italy and Spain, the continent's third- and fourth-largest economies, face unsustainable high costs to finance their debts.

The size of the problems facing Italy and Spain are considered too large for the existing funds available to the European Financial Stability Facility (\$590 billion) and the IMF (\$389 billion). To boost the firepower of the IMF, several economists have proposed that the ECB lend to it.

"We are now entering the critical period," the EU's financial chief, Olli Rehn, said last Wednesday.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Italian government approves austerity measures

MILAN (AP)—Premier Mario Monti said Sunday his government of technocrats has approved a package of austerity and growth measures worth euro30 billion (\$40.53 billion) to "reawaken" the Italian economy and help save the euro common currency from collapse. The measures include immediate cuts to the costs of maintaining Italy's bulky political class as well as significant measures to fight tax evasion, Monti told a news conference following a three-hour Cabinet meeting. As part of the political cost cuts, Monti said he would forego his salaries as premier and finance minister—a move he said was a personal decision and not meant as an example for other ministers in the government, which was formed 2 1/2 weeks ago after Premier Silvio Berlusconi's resignation

under market and political pressure.

Shock waves from MF Global collapse felt on farms

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—The shock waves from the collapse of commodities trading firm MF Global Inc. are hitting hard across rural America, where farmers, ranchers and agricultural business owners are nervously waiting to learn how much money they've lost. Many of the farmers who traded with MF Global, which is being investigated over what federal regulators say is an estimated \$1.2 billion that may be missing from customer accounts, used the futures markets to reduce the risks of volatile prices. Locking in prices through the futures market—something farmers have been doing for a century—allows them to plan ahead while knowing what their costs will be.

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Nation

GOP rivals hope to court Cain supporters

WASHINGTON (AP)—A day after Herman Cain shuttered his Republican candidacy for president, struggling GOP hopefuls looked to pick up the fallen candidate's tea party following and upset a primary dynamic that has pushed Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich to the forefront.

Gingrich's campaign, ramping up its operations in early nominating states, was meeting with former Cain aides and advisers now looking for jobs. While Cain's endorsement remained up for grabs, Gingrich and his rivals were looking to schedule one-on-one meetings this week with the former pizza executive.

Reps. Ron Paul of Texas and Michele Bachmann of Minnesota said Sunday they expected Cain supporters would fall in line behind them because of their messages on limited government, despite their low standing in the polls. Meanwhile, last-place rival Rick Santorum predicted he now had a good chance of winning the Iowa caucus.

While such brazen predictions are probably overstated, the 11th-hour press comes at a crucial time and could upset an already volatile race for the GOP endorsement. A month before the first vote is cast in the Iowa caucus and five weeks before the New Hampshire primary, most

GOP candidates were looking to a week of heavy campaigning in Iowa ahead of the next debate, scheduled for Saturday. The stakes are possibly the highest for Mitt Romney, who could be hurt the worst if Cain supporters rally behind Gingrich.

"A lot of Herman Cain supporters have been calling our office and they've been coming

over to our side," said Bachmann. "They saw Herman Cain as an outsider and I think they see that my voice would be the one that would be most reflective of his."

Likewise, Paul said he was optimistic that Cain's departure would reinvigorate his campaign.

"We're paying a lot of attention to that, because obviously

they're going to go somewhere in the next week or so," Paul said of Cain's supporters.

Santorum predicted that his campaign would pick up steam in coming days.

"We have a very strong, consistent conservative message that matches up better with Iowans than anybody else. And we think we're going to surprise a lot of people," he said.

Once surging in the polls, Cain dropped out of the race Saturday after battling allegations of sexual harassment and a claim that he had a 13-year

extramarital affair. The Georgia businessman has denied the accusations.

Gingrich, the former House speaker from Georgia, has so far been the biggest beneficiary of Cain's slide. A Des Moines Register poll conducted Nov. 27-30 and released late Saturday found the former House speaker leading the GOP field with 25 percent support, ahead of Paul at 18 percent and Romney at 16.

A separate NBC News/Marist poll showed Gingrich beating Romney, 26 percent to 18 per-

cent, among Republican caucus attendees in Iowa.

Gingrich also is enjoying national popularity that could give him the momentum he needs to overcome deficiencies in the organization of his campaign. At the same time, Gingrich says he knows his surge in the polls could disappear if his opponents stage a comeback.

"I'm not going to say that any of my friends can't suddenly surprise us," Gingrich said at a recent town hall meeting in New York sponsored by tea party supporters.



AP
Republican presidential candidate Rep. Michelle Bachmann, left, shakes hands with former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee after her appearance on the Republican Presidential Forum on "Huckabee," the Fox News program hosted by Huckabee, Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011 in New York.

Few teens sexting racy photos, new research says

CHICAGO (AP)—Teen sexting of nude photos online or via cellphone may be far less common than people think, new research suggests.

Only 1 percent of kids aged 10 to 17 have shared images of themselves or others that involve explicit nudity, a nationally representative study found. Roughly the same number said they'd shared suggestive but less graphic photos; while 7 percent said they'd received either type of picture.

The research suggests texting of sexual photos among younger kids is extremely rare but more common among older teens.

The results are reassuring, showing that teen sexting isn't rampant, usually isn't malicious, and is generally not something parents should panic over, said lead author Kimberly Mitchell, a research assistant psychology professor at the University of New Hampshire.

Previous reports said as many as one in five young people - 20 percent - have participated in sexting. But some surveys included older teens and people in their early 20s. And some used definitions of sexting that included racy text messages without photos, or images "no more revealing than what someone

might see at a beach," authors of the new study said.

They focused only on pictures, and asked more detailed questions about the kinds of racy photos kids are sharing.

The researchers did a separate study on how police deal with teen sexting of photos. Contrary to some reports, that research suggests few kids are being prosecuted or forced to register as sex offenders for sexting. It estimates that nearly 4,000 teen sexting cases were reported to police nationwide in 2008 and 2009.

Slightly more than one-third of those cases resulted in arrests. About one-third of all cases involved teens and young adults; the adults were much more likely to be arrested.

The studies were released Monday in the journal Pediatrics. The research shows that sexting can range from incidents that some teen health experts consider typical adolescent exploring—the 21st century version of sneaking a look at dad's Playboy magazine, to malicious cases with serious consequences made possible by today's technology.

For example, one case involved a 10-year-old boy who sent a cellphone picture of his genitals to an 11-year-old

classmate "to gross her out." The girl's mother called police; the boy cried when questioned by police, who concluded he didn't understand the magnitude of his actions and left the matter to his parents.

Another involved a 16-year-old girl who said she accidentally posted a nude photo of herself on a social networking site. A 16-year-old boy at her school found the photo and distributed it to 100 people when she refused his demand to send him more nude pictures. He was charged with a felony and was put on probation.

The results suggest that police generally aren't overreacting to teen sexting, said Janis Wolak, lead author of the second study. Some cases that aren't clearly criminal are still worrisome and warrant intervention by parents or others, she said.

In the first study, researchers questioned 1,560 kids nationwide by phone, with parents' permission, between in August 2010 and January of this year. The second study is based on mailed questionnaires to nearly 3,000 police departments and follow-up phone interviews with investigating officers about sexting cases handled in 2008 and 2009.

McCain: Hispanic vote 'up for grabs'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sen. John McCain said Sunday that the potentially powerful Hispanic vote in the upcoming presidential election remains "up for grabs" because neither President Barack Obama nor Republicans have convinced these voters that they are on their side.

The one-time GOP presidential hopeful, whose own 2008 candidacy was shaped in part by immigration, said that large Hispanic populations in his home state of Arizona and elsewhere are listening carefully to what Republican candidates have to say on immigration and could become a "major factor" in 2012.

"I think that the Republican party has to discuss this issue in as humane way as possible," he said. He later added, "the enthusiasm on the part of Hispanics for President Obama is dramatically less than it was in 2008, because he has not fulfilled his campaign promises either. So I view the Hispanic vote up for grabs."

McCain's comment, on CNN's "State of the Union," is a warning to the GOP primary

candidates who have mostly embraced a hardline on immigration, lest they be accused of supporting any kind of "amnesty" for the some 12 million illegal immigrants estimated to be living in the U.S. Newt Gingrich was most recently attacked by his opponents for saying he would grant legal status to those with longstanding family and community ties; he has since endorsed a South Carolina law that allows police to demand a person's immigration status.

McCain said he believes the Hispanic vote could sway Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico. The key, he said, was for Republicans to address immigration in a humane and pragmatic way that every voter could appreciate. More specifically, McCain said, GOP presidential candidates should find a way to address the status of illegal immigrants already in the country while finding a way to secure the border to deter others from crossing the border.

"It's a careful balance of addressing this issue, which I think the majority of Hispanics would appreciate. . . . We have

to have empathy. We have to have concern. We have to have a plan," he said.

In 2008, McCain watched his own standing in the election suffer when he backed a plan to give some illegal immigrants an eventual path to citizenship.

Gingrich has challenged his GOP opponents to come up with their own plans for dealing with the millions inside the U.S. illegally.

"What is it that you're going to do? Are you really going to go in and advocate ripping people out of their families?" he said.

In 2008, Mitt Romney had supported the idea of allowing some illegal immigrants to sign up for permanent residency or citizenship. More recently, he has said it would be a "mistake" for the GOP to allow anyone to "jump ahead of the line" and characterized Gingrich's approach as a "doorway" to amnesty.

In the interview Sunday, McCain declined to comment on the position of individual candidates. "I respect the views of the voters," he said.

ACROSS THE NATION

US: Bluefin tuna probably OK after BP oil spill

WASHINGTON (AP)—Last year's BP oil spill probably won't push the troubled bluefin tuna population in the Gulf of Mexico over the edge as some scientists had worried, a federal analysis shows. Of all the potential damage from the 172-million-gallon (651-million-liter) spill in April 2010, scientists had been most concerned about how the oil spill would harm an already overfished species of large tuna. That's because about one-fifth of the spawning habitat where the Gulf's baby tuna were living was coated with oil, according to satellite records. Tuna less than a year old are most vulnerable to pollution.

Obama calls Pakistan leader about NATO airstrikes

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama has told Pakistan's president that the NATO airstrikes that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers were not deliberate attacks and that the U.S. is committed to a full investigation. The strikes along the border with Afghanistan last weekend

have further strained ties between the U.S. and Pakistan as the Obama administration tries to wind down the war in Afghanistan. The White House says Obama and Pakistan's president, Asif Ali Zardari (AH'-seef ah-LEE' zar-DAH'-ree), reaffirmed their countries' relationship and agreed to keep in close touch.

Police arrest Occupy Portland demonstrators

PORLAND, Ore. (AP)—Authorities say riot police moved into a downtown Portland park area and arrested several anti-Wall Street protesters Saturday night after they refused to vacate the park. Police Sgt. Pete Simpson says officers began detaining protesters at South Park blocks around 8:30 p.m., after the park was closed a half hour early. He says several arrests were made but still doesn't have an exact count. Occupy Portland demonstrators set up tents in a portion of the park that runs through Southwest Portland earlier in the day and vowed to stay through the winter, defying city officials who said overnight camping will not be allowed.

Asia

Pakistani Taliban splintering into factions

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Battered by Pakistani military operations and U.S. drone strikes, the once-formidable Pakistani Taliban has splintered into more than 100 smaller factions, weakened and is running short of cash, according to security officials, analysts and tribesmen from the insurgent heartland.

The group, allied with al-Qaida and based in the northwest close to the Afghan border, has been behind much of the violence tearing apart Pakistan over the last 4 1/2 years. Known as the Tehrik-e-Taliban, or TTP, the Taliban want to oust the U.S.-backed government and install a hard-line Islamist regime. They also have international ambitions and trained the Pakistani-American who tried to detonate a car bomb in New York City's Times Square in 2010.

"Today, the command structure of the TTP is splintered, weak and divided and they are running out of money," said Mansur Mahsud, a senior researcher at the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Area) Research Center. "In the bigger picture, this helps the army and the government because the Taliban are now divided."

The first signs of cracks within the Pakistani Taliban appeared after its leader, Baitullah Mehsud, was killed in a drone strike in August 2009, Mahsud said. Since then, the group has steadily deteriorated.



Pakistani workers burn a replica U.S. flag during a rally to condemn NATO airstrikes on Pakistani troops, in Lahore, Pakistan, Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011.

Set up in 2007, the Pakistani Taliban is an umbrella organization created to represent roughly 40 insurgent groups in the tribal belt plus al-Qaida-linked groups headquartered in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province.

"In the different areas, leaders are making their own peace

talks with the government," Mahsud added. "It could help the Pakistani government and military separate more leaders from the TTP and more foot soldiers from their commanders."

The two biggest factors hampering away at the Taliban's unity are U.S. drone strikes and

Pakistani army operations in the tribal region.

Turf wars have flared as militants fleeing the Pakistani military operations have moved into territory controlled by other militants, sometimes sparking clashes between groups. And as leaders have been killed either by drones

or the Pakistani army, lieutenants have fought among themselves over who will replace them.

"The disintegration ... has accelerated with the Pakistan military operation in South Waziristan and the drone attacks by the United States in North Waziristan," Mahsud said, referring

to the two tribal agencies that are the heartland of the Pakistani Taliban.

Another factor is the divide-and-conquer strategy Pakistan's military has long employed in its dealings with militants. Commanders have broken away from the TTP and set up their own factions, weakening the organization. Battles have broken out among the breakaway factions, and in one particularly remote tribal region the TTP was thrown out. These growing signs of fissures among the disparate groups that make up the Pakistani Taliban indicate the military's strategy could be paying off.

That would explain the mixed signals this month coming out of the tribal belt, where some militants are mulling the idea of peace talks with the government, others are offering to stop fighting and still others are disavowing both peace and a cease-fire. It might also explain a steady decline in suicide attacks in Pakistan, according to the privately run Pak Institute for Peace Studies.

The U.S. is eager to see some benefits in neighboring Afghanistan, where its troops have come under attack from militants based across the border in Pakistan. NATO forces in Afghanistan are trying to break the back of the Afghan insurgency before the end of the U.S.-led coalition's combat mission in 2014.

ASIA BRIEFS

Vietnam: 42,000 people killed by leftover weapons

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—Vietnam's prime minister says more than 42,000 people have been killed by bombs, mines and ordnance left from the Vietnam War, and more continue to die 36 years after the war ended. Nguyen Tan Dung told a mine action donors' conference Monday that more than 62,000 others have been wounded by accidental explosions of weapons from the war. U.S. Ambassador David Shear told the conference that the United States has provided \$62 million to help Vietnam deal with "this painful legacy."

Cambodian court to question ex-Khmer Rouge leaders

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—Three senior leaders of Cambodia's brutal Khmer Rouge regime will be questioned at a U.N.-backed tribunal for the first time Monday over their roles in the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people when their movement held power in the 1970s. The

three defendants, all in their 80s, sat side by side in the court Monday as the judge opened the day's proceedings. The long-awaited trial began late last month with opening statements, and this week the court is expected to focus on charges involving the forced movement of people and crimes against humanity.

Hundreds gather for Singapore 'SlutWalk' protest

SINGAPORE (AP)—Hundreds of people gathered at a park in Singapore on Sunday to protest sexual violence against women as part of the global "SlutWalk" movement,

in a rare public demonstration in the tightly controlled city state. The event featured live music, speeches and a women's Muay Thai martial arts exhibition at downtown Singapore's Speakers' Corner, the only public outdoor space where demonstrations are allowed in the Southeast Asian country. Participants at the rally did not dress provocatively as some activists have in SlutWalks in U.S. and Canadian cities.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Six Chinese fishermen accused of poaching endangered sea turtles were charged in a Philippine court Monday, part of efforts to protect threatened wildlife along the country's coastline.

Authorities discovered a batch of giant green turtles after intercepting the fishermen's speedboat in waters off the western province of Palawan on Friday, said military spokesman Maj. Niel Estrella. A joint team from the Philippine navy, coast guard and the Environment Department made the seizure.

The boat was likely attached to a mother ship that escaped after the fishermen were de-

tained, Estrella said.

Nine of the turtles were already dead, but three were released alive back into the waters after being tagged, Glenda Cadigal, a wildlife specialist at the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, told The Associated Press.

Sea turtles, also known as Chelonia mydas, are often caught for food and for use in traditional medicine. They can grow as long as 5 feet (150 centimeters) and weigh as much as 290 pounds (130 kilograms). They are endangered because of overharvesting of both eggs and adults.

On Monday, authorities filed criminal charges under the Philippines' Wildlife Act and Fisheries Code at the Palawan Re-

gional Trial Court in the capital Puerto Princessa, said Adelina Villena, chief lawyer for the government's Palawan Council for Sustainable Development.

If found guilty on all charges, the fishermen would face up to 24 years in prison. They were not requested to enter a plea Monday and a date for their arraignment was not immediately set, Villena said.

Last year, six Chinese fishermen also on a speedboat were arrested near the same area with more than 50 turtles, many of them already butchered and one bearing a monitoring tag of the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute, said

Maoist rebels kill 11 in attacks in eastern India

PATNA, India (AP)—Maoist rebels have killed 11 people in attacks across an eastern Indian state after their leader died in a gunbattle with security forces, police said.

Another officer was hospitalized with injuries. Former Jharkhand Speaker Inder Singh Namdhari escaped unharmed.

The rebels also set fire Sunday to a cellphone tower in southwest Bihar state, on the border with Jharkhand, and vowed to continue their agitation through Monday as they protest the Nov. 24 killing of Koteshwar Rao,

known as Kishanji, in the neighboring state of West Bengal.

The rebels, inspired by Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong, have been fighting for more than three decades in several Indian states to demand land and jobs for agricultural laborers and the poor.

Referred to as Naxalites, after the West Bengal village of Naxalbari, where the movement began in 1967, they fre-

Cadigal, the wildlife specialist. Those fishermen's trial is still ongoing.

"These kind of practices endanger the lives of other creatures in the sea because marine turtles have their function in the balance of the ecosystem," Cadigal said.

She said the turtles feed and provide nutrients to the sea grass bed, allowing new leaves to sprout and be eaten by small fishes.

Palawan, about 510 miles (820 kilometers) southwest of Manila, is the nearest Philippine province to the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, which are claimed by China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Vietnam and Brunei.

quently target police and government workers.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has called the rebels the biggest internal threat to India's security.

Last month, security forces launched a hunt for Kishanji and other rebel leaders in the jungles of West Bengal, eventually killing the top rebel in a gunbattle and seizing large stocks of arms and ammunition.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Police: 6 die when town attacked in north Nigeria

MAIDUGURI, Nigeria (AP)—Gunmen from a radical Muslim sect raided a town in northern Nigeria early Sunday morning, bombing police stations and robbing banks in an attack that killed at least six people, authorities said. The attack in Azare in Bauchi state mirrored other recent attacks by the sect known as Boko Haram, showing their ability to strike at will in Nigeria's Muslim north. The attack also shows the group remains focused on raising cash for future attacks in the oil-rich nation. Sect members bombed two police stations in the city and robbed local branches for bank chains Guaranty Trust Bank PLC and Intercontinental Bank PLC, Bauchi police commissioner Ikechukwu Aduba said. One police officer, one soldier and four civilians were killed during the five-hour attack, he said.

Iran says it shot down unmanned US spy plane

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran's armed forces have shot down an unmanned U.S. spy plane that violated Iranian airspace along the country's eastern border, the official IRNA news agency reported Sunday. An unidentified military official quoted in the report warned of a strong and crushing response to any violations of the country's airspace by American drone aircraft. "An advanced RQ-170 unmanned American spy plane was shot down by Iran's armed forces. It suffered minor damage and is now in possession of Iran's armed forces," IRNA quoted the official as saying.

Putin's party losing support in parliamentary vote

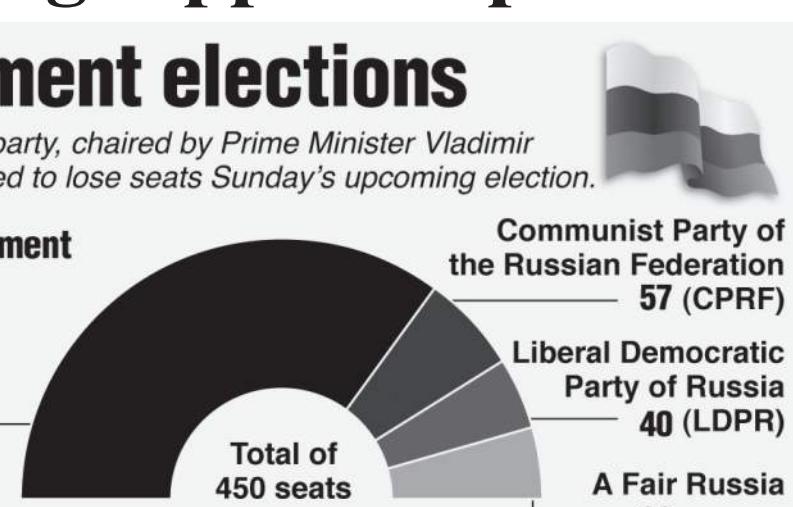
Parliament elections

Russia's ruling party, chaired by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, is expected to lose seats Sunday's upcoming election.

Seats in parliament

Lower house of parliament, the State Duma

United Russia
315 seats



Current parties

United Russia Expected to keep simple majority but lose its two-thirds majority that makes it able to pass changes to the constitution

LDPR Describes itself as the only right-wing party in Russia, supports strong state; expected to win 10-12 percent of vote

- Three other parties will be vying for seats: Yabloko, Right Cause and Patriots of Russia; all unlikely to make it into the State Duma

Source: CIA Factbook, BBC

Graphic: Melina Yingling

© 2011 MCT

peared to benefit from the protest vote, with exit polls and the early returns predicting it would get nearly 20 percent, up from less than 12 percent four years ago.

Putting a positive spin on the disappointing returns, Putin said "we can ensure the stable development of the country with this result." But he appeared glum when speaking to supporters at United Russia headquarters and limited his remarks to a terse statement.

United Russia held a two-thirds majority in the outgoing State Duma, which allowed it to change the constitution unchallenged. But the party is increasingly disliked, seen as representing a corrupt bureaucracy and known to many as the "party of crooks and thieves."

The Communist Party ap-

peared to benefit from the protest vote, with exit polls and the early returns predicting it would get nearly 20 percent, up from less than 12 percent four years ago.

But Putin should still have no serious difficulties getting his laws passed. The two other parties in parliament also looked set to gain seats, and both have consistently voted with United Russia. Even the Communists pose only tempered opposition.

The results with nearly 95 of the precincts counted showed 49.7 percent for United Russia. This was in line with an exit poll conducted by the VT-610M polling agency that had United Russia tallying 48.5

percent and another done by the FOM polling agency that had it winning 46 percent of the vote. The two polls were reported by the two state television channels.

Complete results were expected at 0600 GMT Monday (1 a.m. EDT). About 60 percent of Russia's 110 million registered voters cast ballots, down from 64 percent four years ago.

Only seven parties were allowed to field candidates for parliament this year, while the most vocal opposition groups were barred.

Several parties complained Sunday of extensive election violations aimed at boosting

United Russia's vote count, including party observers being hindered in their work.

Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov said his party monitors thwarted an attempt to stuff a ballot box at a Moscow polling station where they found 300 ballots already in the box before the start of the vote.

He said incidents of ballot-stuffing were reported at several other stations in Moscow, Rostov-on-Don and other areas. In the southern city of Krasnodar, unidentified people posing as Communist monitors had shown up at polling stations and the real observers from the party weren't allowed in, Zyuganov said.

hands of SCAF right now," he said, hoping the ruling generals will help promote the consensus.

However, ElBaradei was highly critical of the military rulers, saying they have "royally mismanaged" the transition period.

He also raised concerns about statements by some Salafi elements questioning whether women should be banned from driving, as they are in Saudi Arabia, or branding the novels of Egypt's Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz as "prostitution."

"I worry of course that some of the extreme stuff coming out from some of the Salafis ... when you hear that literature of somebody like Mahfouz is equal to prostitution, if you hear that we are still debating whether women are going to drive their cars, if we are still discussing whether democracy is against Shariah," or Islamic law, ElBaradei said.

"In my view, it is all in the

ing in 18 of the country's 27 provinces over the coming month and runoff elections on Monday and Tuesday to determine almost all of the seats allocated for individuals in the first round. But the grip of the

Islamists over the next parliament appears set, particularly considering their popularity in provinces voting in the next rounds.

ElBaradei said he thought the combined strength of the two top-placed Islamist blocs surprised everyone, probably even the winning parties themselves.

"The outcome so far is not the greatest one," he said, summing up the mood of the country's educated elite as well as average



ElBaradei

"The youth feel let down. They don't feel that any of the revolution's goals have been achieved," ElBaradei told The Associated Press in an interview on the same day electoral authorities announced that Isla-

Mexico drug war refugees escape to more bloodshed

Mexico drug war refugees escape to more bloodshed

VERACRUZ, Mexico (AP)—Rafael Echevarria had a steady factory job, a modest home of his own, and enough cash to occasionally take his family to McDonald's. It was a good life until the drug war hit Ciudad Juarez, followed by two robberies at his house, extortion at his daughter's school, and finally, the shootout on the bus.

When the firing began, 6-year-old Valeria dove to the floor, breaking a tooth. There was so much blood from her mouth wound, her parents thought she'd been shot.

The next day, the couple and their two children boarded a flight back home to Veracruz, along with 1,600 others who had once moved north for work in foreign assembly plants and now were fleeing south in search of safety. The Veracruz state government paid for the flights, and assured the drug war refugees that there would be jobs, education and housing.

At the time, it seemed to the Echevarrias like the only solution.

Then the drug war followed them home.

Military offensives against the drug cartels and turf battles among crime syndicates have pushed the war into areas once considered quiet. A year after their hopeful flight, the Echevarrias are not only caught anew in a crush of violence, but still without the promised help.

In Juarez, the Echevarrias had a house and a van. In Veracruz, they've had to pawn their appliances and move to a concrete hut to make ends meet. The trade of solvency for safety was a fake choice, because in Juarez, Echevarria said, "We would have been living well."

"Now we're in a hole. And it's very difficult to get out."

The Echevarrias are among thousands of Mexicans who make up the internal diaspora trying to escape drug violence that seems to migrate rather than cease, with more than 45,000 troops fighting cartels and more than 40,000 dead by many counts.

Recent survey results by Parametria found that 1.6 million Mexicans have moved because of drug violence since 2006. One study by the Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre put the number at 230,000 in 2010, estimating that half fled to the United States.

Another study, by demographer Rodolfo Rubio at Colegio de la Frontera Norte, says 200,000 people left Juarez alone for other Mexican cities between 2007 and 2010.

Egypt's ElBaradei: Liberals 'decimated' in vote

CAIRO (AP)—Egypt's top reformist leader said Sunday the liberal youth behind the country's uprising have been "decimated" in parliamentary elections dominated by Islamists and expressed concern about the rise of hard-line religious elements advocating extremist ideas such as banning women from driving.

Mohamed ElBaradei, a Nobel Prize laureate and possible presidential candidate, said he hopes moderate Islamists will rein in the extremists and send a reassuring message to the world that Egypt will not go down an ultraconservative religious path.

"The youth feel let down. They don't feel that any of the revolution's goals have been achieved," ElBaradei told The Associated Press in an interview on the same day electoral authorities announced that Isla-

mist parties captured an overwhelming majority of votes in the first round of elections last week. "They got decimated," he said, adding the youth failed to unify and form "one essential critical mass."

The High Election Commission announced that the Islamic fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party garnered 36.6 percent of the 9.7 million valid ballots cast last week for party lists. The Nour Party, representing the more hard-line Salafi Islamists, captured 24.4 percent.

The tallies offer only a partial indication of how the new parliament will look. There are still two more rounds of vot-

Egyptians as "angst."

The new parliament will be tasked, in theory, with selecting a 100-member panel to draft the new constitution. If Islamist parties dominate, more liberal forces worry the constitution will be greatly influenced by the religious perspective.

In a move that angered the Islamist groups, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, which took control of the country after Mubarak's fall in February, has suggested that it will choose 80 of those members.

ElBaradei said writing the constitution that respects human rights, dignity and freedom of expression should be based on a consensus among all the players, and not on a parliamentary majority.

"In my view, it is all in the

Focus



Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai steps up to the podium to address the delegates during a dinner one day ahead of the Afghanistan conference to be held in Bonn, Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011 in Bonn.

Planning Afghanistan's future beyond 2014

BONN, Germany (AP)—Unable to persuade key neighbor Pakistan to reconsider its boycott of an international gathering on Afghanistan's future, the United States and conference organizers said they will go ahead with promises of continued aid for Afghanistan after most foreign forces leave the country.

The Bonn conference is expected to address the transfer of security responsibility from international forces to Afghan security forces over the next three years, long-term prospects for international aid and a possible political settlement with the Taliban.

About 100 countries and international organizations will be represented, with some 60 foreign ministers in attendance, among them U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

"Our objective is a peaceful Afghanistan that will never again become a safe haven for international terrorism," German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle said.

The Bonn conference attendees are also hoping to agree on a set of mutual binding commitments under which Afghanistan would promise reforms and work toward goals such as good governance, with donors and international organizations pledging long-term assistance in return to ensure the country's viability beyond 2014.

Afghanistan will present a sobering view of its economic dependence on foreign aid and

from Afghan territory, that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. The deaths fed the popular perspective in Pakistan that the U.S. and NATO, not the Taliban, are Pakistan's principal enemies.

Pakistan's army accused NATO of a "deliberate act of aggression," an assertion the Pentagon hotly denied. Pakistan has received billions in U.S. aid since 2001, largely in expectation of cooperation against militants.

Clinton called the deaths tragic and pledged a thorough investigation. Pakistan rebuffed her entreaties, as recently as Saturday, to reconsider and attend the conference. President Barack Obama called Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari Sunday to reaffirm that the NATO airstrikes were not deliberate

attacks and that the U.S. is committed to a full investigation.

The U.S. had once hoped to use the Bonn gathering to announce news about the prospect for peace talks with the Taliban, but Afghan and U.S. outreach efforts have not borne fruit.

The reconciliation efforts suffered a major setback after the September assassination of former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, who was leading the Afghan government's effort to broker peace with the insurgents.

The final declaration of the Bonn conference is expected to outline broad principles for political reconciliation with the Taliban, a project that several leading participants in the conference increasingly predict will outlast the NATO timeline

for withdrawal in 2014.

The session is also expected to address the holdup in hundreds of millions in development aid for smaller, community-based projects because of financial irregularities and corruption in Afghanistan's key Kabul Bank. The International Monetary Fund lifted some restrictions related to Kabul Bank last month, which Afghan diplomats said should give a green light to renewed international contributions. The U.S. has held its annual contribution to between \$650 million and \$700 million.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will formally open the one-day conference of about 1,000 dele-

gates. Afghanistan's western neighbor Iran also joins the conference, represented by Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi.

Afghanistan is failing in two major areas in particular: security and good government. Violence has gone up sharply this year, and has spread to the once-peaceful north of the country. And widespread corruption is bedeviling attempts to create a viable Afghan government and institutions to take over when the U.S. and NATO leave.

Afghanistan provides about 90 percent of the world's opium, the raw ingredient used to make heroin. Money from the sale of opium is also used to fuel the insurgency, helping to buy weapons and equipment for the Taliban.

*In Lovingly Memory of
our Dearly beloved*

Camilo Arellano Orallo

Lovingly known as "Milo"

October 28, 1943 – December 4, 2011

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Wife:

Cirila Orallo

Children:

Imelda Orallo Reyes

Marilou Orallo Johnson

Richard Orallo

Rhoda Marie Orallo Ibanez

Camille Orallo

Brother & Sisters:

Mary Layson

Flordelisa Mortel

Juanito Orallo

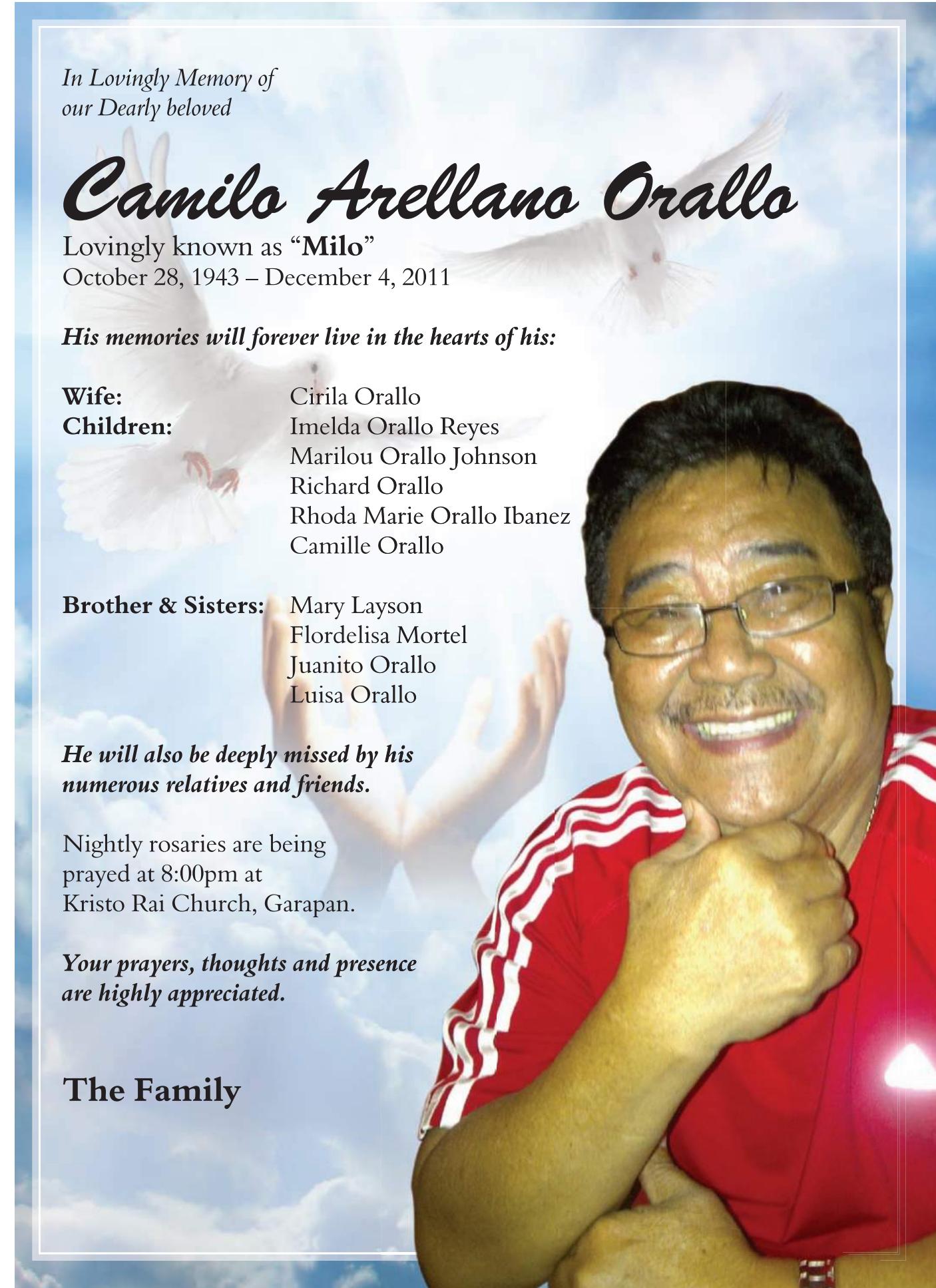
Luisa Orallo

*He will also be deeply missed by his
numerous relatives and friends.*

Nightly rosaries are being
prayed at 8:00pm at
Kristo Rai Church, Garapan.

*Your prayers, thoughts and presence
are highly appreciated.*

The Family



Overdrive

2012 Dodge Charger SRT8: A wolf with impressive manners

By BARRY SPYKER
MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

Ike a wolf in sheep's clothing, the 2012 Dodge Charger SRT8 fooled me at first drive, coming across unexpectedly tame and docile.

Geez, with its cushioned ride and smooth acceleration, this almost feels like a luxury car. But one look at the bulging hood up front reminded me that this may be a wolf trying to conceal his big teeth.

Underneath that lovely, sloping hood sits a big, bad 470-horsepower, 6.4-liter beast that wants to rocket you to 60 mph in under 5 seconds. And switching to sport mode tightens up the ride as if the wolf had ripped off that lousy sheep garb and tossed it into the river with a snarl.

Therein lies the beauty of this SRT8: It is one of the few outright muscle cars that gives great fun yet can behave well enough to handle the everyday chores of shopping and soccer games. Not a bad trait.

Looking at the SRT8, there's nothing sheepish about it. It has an aggressive, even nasty front with a tall grille underscored by a blackened bumper. Side panels have carved-out indents. Its stance is enhanced by 20-inch two-tone wheels. Taillights sweep around the entire rear of the car like casino neon.

The Charger is quicker than last year, hitting 60 mph in about 4.6 seconds. Acceleration is swift and fun—and it sounds musical on its way up the dial.



MCT

The 2012 Dodge Charger SRT8 will rocket you to 60 mph in under 5 seconds.

beats the predecessor by three-tenths of a second, and it brings a herd of 50 more horses down the trail. The 470 horses kick up 470 foot-pounds of torque, too, which is available in liberal doses across the rpm band.

The Charger is quicker than last year, hitting 60 mph in about 4.6 seconds. Acceleration is swift and fun—and it sounds musical on its way up the dial.

This rear-wheel-drive muscle requires some fuel, of course.

Expect 14 mpg around town, 23 on the open road when respecting the law.

Side note to the easier-to-please: The 3.6-liter engine on the base model is amazingly powerful, too, and its 8-speed automatic tranny is a nice companion for improved fuel economy. Still, it's no SRT8, which is everything a high-performance muscle car should be: lots of power, great sound and acceleration.

Steering is right on, offer-

ing precise turns thanks to an improved rack-and-pinion system. Bilstein shocks at all four wheels assure a comfortable ride in the default setting and, in sport mode, a firm ride with decent handling for twisty roads.

That is, it's rather agile for a full-size sedan. Not ready to take on Porsche among the orange cones, but a real performer. Brembo brakes bring the Charger to rest swiftly and cleanly.

Only the 5-speed transmis-

sion is available with the SRT8, and it offers some kick—good for some, not for others seeking an even smoother acceleration.

The sharp, racy look continues inside with two-tone colors—two choices are available—and a new flat-bottomed steering wheel, aluminum paddle-shifters and foot pedals.

Seats are trimmed in perforated leather and suede. The front bucket seats have large bolsters on the sides, which are support-

ive and comfortable, but the seat cushion is smallish and may be tight for bigger folks. Look behind you, and "SRT" is embroidered into the front seat backs.

The dash and center console are superb to touch and look at, with soft materials and carbon fiber accents. Dials are large and easy to see. Between the tachometer and speedometer, with its top speed of 180 mph, an info window details recent mileage, temperature and race clock for the track.

A large, 8.4-inch touch screen is easy to read and operate for climate data and audio, and it's one of the easiest navigation systems I've ever encountered. A row of push-button icons at the bottom make using the system a cinch.

Overall, the Charger is roomy enough from head to toe except for back-seat headroom, which is compromised some by the slanting roof. That also contributes to less than ideal visibility in the rear.

Trunk space is decent, but not great for a full-size car, at 15.4 cubic feet. I recently drove a subcompact with 14.

Safety is enhanced with optional blind-spot monitoring, rear cross-path detection system, and cruise control with collision-warning feature.

Standard are stability and traction control, antilock braking system, front air bags, driver-side air bags and side-curtain bags.

Fear not the big bad wolf. It can behave when you want it to—under light loads, it even cuts back on four cylinders to improve mileage. But it also knows how to be bad when you feel like howling at the moon.

accelerating at half-throttle or greater onto the freeway, steady freeway driving for five minutes or more, back to city streets for a time, idling for 30 seconds, then engine shut-off.

A quick check of monitor completion can be made with an inexpensive scan tool before you return to the smog check facility. I'm fond of the AutoLink (AL309) Scan Tool or a similar unit from your local auto parts store. One of these makes a great Christmas gift and could turn a home mechanic into a neighborhood hero.

Brad Bergholdt is an automotive technology instructor at Evergreen Valley College in San Jose, Calif. Readers may send him email at under-the-hood@earthlink.net; he cannot make personal replies.

UNDER THE HOOD

A case of monitor amnesia

By BRAD BERGHELD
MCCLATCHY-TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

QUESTION: I took my car in for a smog inspection and they wouldn't pass it because my "monitor" hadn't finished. It runs fine and has never failed the inspection before. A few weeks before the smog, I had the charging alternator replaced and the usual service. Could this be related? What is this monitor? They said to drive it more and come back in a few weeks.—Paula Yeargan

ANSWER: OK, it sounds like your car is a 1996 model year or newer, and the battery was recently disconnected. Cars and light trucks built during the past fifteen years employ OBD-II (On Board Diagnostics, second generation) to scrutinize engine and emission system performance. Should a fault develop that would cause the vehicle

to exceed allowable emissions levels, the "check engine" light will illuminate and a diagnostic trouble code is stored. Testing of the many components and systems is divided into categories of continuous and occasional tests, which are called monitors. In addition to the visual, tailpipe and treadmill or dynamometer tests, your emissions inspection requires the vehicle to be interrogated by the analyzer, showing successful completion of most or all monitors.

Most vehicles employ about

nine monitors. The continuously running ones are the comprehensive component monitor, fuel system monitor and misfire monitor. Noncontinuous monitors are the oxygen sensor monitor, thermostat monitor, catalytic converter monitor, evaporative system monitor, air conditioning monitor, and depending on the engine application; exhaust-gas recirculation and air injection monitors.

Noncontinuous monitors require the use of correctly functioning sensors—sensors that

have been previously validated elsewhere—and specific driving conditions to occur before the test can be run and completed. This is the thorny part. Weather, high altitude or a vehicle operator's slightly unusual driving routine may result in a monitor not running for days, weeks, or even months. Whenever diagnostic trouble codes are erased or the vehicle battery is disconnected, all monitor results are erased and need to be re-established. During your alternator replacement, the battery was disconnected. It's a prudent procedure, but apparently a memory-saver method or device was not used—or an error occurred.

If your smog check technician indicated which monitor had not yet completed, or a printout indicates this, it may prove helpful in determining how best to run the needed drive cycle, which varies according to the monitor. An example of a typical drive cycle that may run all monitors includes a cold start, a variety of moderate speed city driving,

Life & Style

‘Twilight’ stays bright but Hollywood snoozes

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The latest “Twilight” movie cast the longest shadow with \$16.9 million for a third-straight No. 1 finish during one of the year’s slowest weekends at the box office.

Business was dismal, with box-office tracker Hollywood.com estimating Sunday that domestic revenues totaled just \$82 million. That puts it barely ahead of Hollywood’s worst haul of the year, when revenues were \$81.5 million over the second weekend in September.

Once studios release final numbers Monday, this past weekend could come in as the worst of the year if revenues finish even lower.

The first weekend of December often presents a lull in between big Thanksgiving releases and the onslaught of year-end blockbusters that arrive a bit later. But this big a slowdown is surprising given that there’s quality stuff out there among the top-10 films, particularly family fare such as “The Muppets,” “Hugo” and “Arthur Christmas.”

Hollywood executives usually blame bad weekends on a weak crop of movies.

“It’s tough to blame it on the product when the product is pretty good and the films are solid,” said Hollywood.com analyst Paul Dergarabedian. “While the post-Thanksgiving weekend is typically slow, it’s not usually this slow.”

The dreary weekend comes after a relatively quiet Thanksgiving holiday at movie theaters, despite analysts’ predictions of potential holiday records because of a great lineup of films.

But more fans might be thinking twice about heading out to theaters given the new entertainment options they have with Apple’s iPad, Amazon’s Kindle products and other gadgets, along with their big-screen home setups for movies and television.

Or it could be that Hollywood has temporarily neglected its mainstay audience of young males. Dergarabedian said there’s little out there now for guys looking for thrills and laughs.

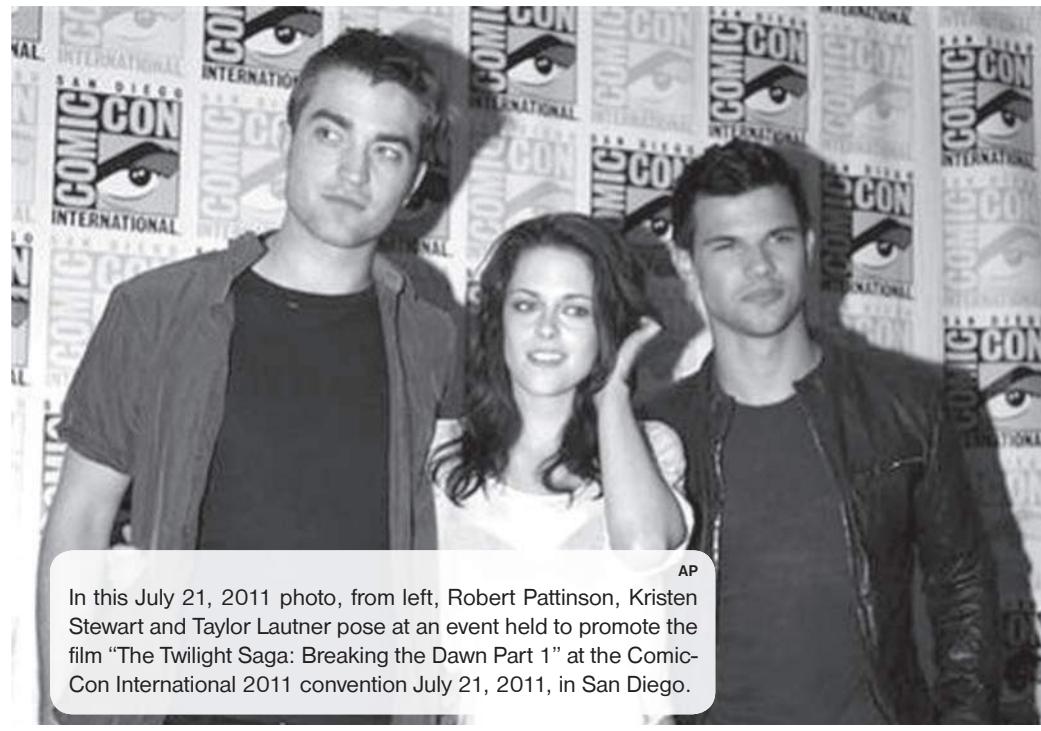
That will change in the com-

Garrison Keillor says he’s reevaluating retirement

SIOUX CITY, Iowa (AP)—Garrison Keillor says he’s reconsidering thoughts about retirement.

The host of public radio’s “A Prairie Home Companion” told the Sioux City Journal this week that he thought about quitting the show, but it panicked him and led to him “rethinking the whole brilliant idea.”

He said the show is going well and he loves doing it, so



In this July 21, 2011 photo, from left, Robert Pattinson, Kristen Stewart and Taylor Lautner pose at an event held to promote the film “The Twilight Saga: Breaking the Dawn Part 1” at the Comic-Con International 2011 convention July 21, 2011, in San Diego.

1. “The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn—Part 1,” \$16.9 million (\$40.2 million international).
2. “The Muppets,” \$11.2 million (\$1.8 million international).
3. “Hugo,” \$7.6 million.
4. “Arthur Christmas,” \$7.4 million (\$11.4 million international).
5. “Happy Feet Two,” \$6 million (\$16.3 million international).
6. “Jack and Jill,” \$5.5 million (\$3.2 million international).
7. “The Descendants,” \$5.2 million.
8. “Immortals,” \$4.4 million (\$4 million international).
9. “Tower Heist,” \$4.1 million (\$4 million international).
10. “Puss in Boots,” \$3.1 million (\$23 million international).

Estimated weekend ticket sales at international theaters (excluding the U.S. and Canada) for films distributed overseas by Hollywood studios, according to Rentrak:

1. “The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn—Part 1,” \$40.2 million.
2. “Puss in Boots,” \$23 million.
3. “Happy Feet Two,” \$16.3 million.
4. (tie). “Arthur Christmas,” \$11.4 million.
4. (tie). “Vostok: Thank God I’m Alive,” \$11.4 million.
6. “The Adventures of Tintin,” \$10.6 million.
7. “In Time,” \$9.6 million.
8. “Real Steel,” \$5.3 million.
9. (tie). “Immortals,” \$4 million.
9. (tie). “Tower Heist,” \$4 million.

ing weeks as Jonah Hill’s comedy “The Sitter” opens Friday, followed by a rush of action tales: Tom Cruise’s “Mission: Impossible—Ghost Protocol,” Robert Downey Jr.’s “Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows” and Steven Spielberg’s “The Adventures of Tintin.”

Women and families continue to dominate the scanty business at theaters now. Summit Entertainment’s female-driven blockbuster “The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn—Part 1” raised its domestic haul to \$247.3 million. “Breaking Dawn” added

\$40.2 million overseas, taking it to a tally of \$341 million internationally and \$588.3 million worldwide.

Coming in second again was Disney’s “The Muppets” with \$11.2 million, lifting the family film’s domestic total to \$56.1 million. Despite good reviews, though, “The Muppets” audience was off more sharply than any other top-10 movie compared to Thanksgiving weekend.

Paramount’s family adventure “Hugo,” an acclaimed

saga directed by Martin Scorsese, finished third with \$7.6 million, raising its domestic take to \$25.2 million.

Sony’s animated holiday comedy “Arthur Christmas” was fourth with \$7.4 million, pushing its total to \$25.3 million.

In limited release, Fox Searchlight’s sexually explicit drama “Shame” opened strongly with \$361,181 at 10 theaters in six cities. “Shame” expands to six more cities Friday.

Starring Michael Fassbender in a grim portrait of a sex addict, “Shame” is the latest film angling to lure moviegoers despite an NC-17 rating that prohibits anyone younger than 17 from seeing it.

Some fans and theaters equate the NC-17 tag with pornography, but serious films with that rating occasionally break through and find an audience. Fox Searchlight is positioning “Shame” for Academy Awards attention after the film earned Fassbender the best-actor prize at the Venice Film Festival.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. Where available, latest international numbers are also included. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

Early Monroe photos sell for over \$300K at auction

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Copyrights and images from Marilyn Monroe’s first photo shoot sold for \$352,000 at an auction that included items from Lady Gaga and John Lennon.

Julien’s Auctions spokeswoman Caroline Galloway tells The Associated Press on Sunday that the Monroe photos—taken in 1946 when she was still Norma Jeane Dougherty—were the highlight of the Beverly Hills auction known

as “Icons & Idols”

The photos come with negatives and the rare right to sell and distribute them. A judge in September ruled they must be auctioned to settle debts of photographer Joseph Jasgur.

A Lady Gaga dress sold for \$31,250, and the prop gun used in her video for “Born This Way” went for \$7,680.

A 1969 caricature John Lennon drew of himself and Yoko Ono went for \$90,000.

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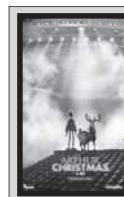
The Muppets

Friday	4:20	7:20	9:40
Saturday	1:20	4:20	7:20
Sunday	1:20	4:20	7:20
Monday thru Thursday	4:20	7:20	

Jason Segel, Amy Adams
Children’s/family, Comedy • Rated PG

Synopsis

When an evil oil man discovers black gold beneath Muppet Theater, Kermit recruits a Muppet super-fan and his two best friends to help gather up the gang for a telethon that will save the venue from being razed and replaced with a giant oil pump. Tex Richman (Chris Cooper) never met an oil field he couldn’t suck dry. So when Tex discovers a bountiful reservoir right underneath Muppet Theater, he begins drawing up plans to claim the land and start drilling. Little does Tex realize that devoted Muppets fan Walter is currently in Los Angeles with his best friends Gary (Jason Segel) and Mary (Amy Adams), and that he’s not about to let one man’s greed spoil a good thing for everyone. With Kermit by their side, Walter, Gary, and Mary hatch a plan to put on a big telethon that will help them raise the ten million dollars needed to keep Muppet Theater standing.



Arthur Christmas

Friday	4:10	7:10	9:45
Saturday	1:10	4:10	7:10
Sunday	1:10	4:10	7:10
Monday thru Thursday	4:10	7:10	

James McAvoy, Hugh Laurie
Comedy • Rated PG



Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn-Part 1

Friday	4:15	7:15	10:00
Saturday	1:15	4:15	7:15
Sunday	1:15	4:15	7:15
Monday thru Thursday	4:15	7:15	

Robert Pattinson, Kristen Stewart
Fantasy • Rated PG 13



Happy Feet Two

Friday	4:00	7:00	9:30
Saturday	1:00	4:00	7:00
Sunday	1:00	4:00	7:00
Monday thru Thursday	4:00	7:00	

Elijah Wood, Robin Williams
Children’s/family • Rated PG



Immortals

Friday	4:25	7:25	9:55
Saturday	1:25	4:25	7:25
Sunday	1:25	4:25	7:25
Monday thru Thursday	4:25	7:25	

Henry Cavill, Mickey Rourke, Freida Pinto
Epic • Rated R



Jack and Jill

Friday	4:30	7:30	9:50
Saturday	1:30	4:30	7:30
Sunday	1:30	4:30	7:30
Monday thru Thursday	4:30	7:30	

Adam Sandler, Katie Holmes
Comedy • Rated PG



Tower Heist

Friday			9:35
Saturday			9:35
Sunday			7:05
Monday thru Thursday			7:05

Ben Stiller, Eddie Murphy
Crime, Comedy • Rated PG 13



Puss in Boots

Friday	4:05	7:05	
Saturday	1:05	4:05	7:05
Sunday	1:05	4:05	
Monday thru Thursday	4:05		

Anonio Banderas, Salma Hayek
Children’s/family • Rated PG

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Ma, Diamond, Streep receive Kennedy Center Honors

WASHINGTON (AP)—Meryl Streep may have gotten her next film assignment, Neil Diamond thanked the namesake of his famous tune “Sweet Caroline,” and a tux-clad Elmo honored his friend, Yo-Yo Ma. They were among several luminaries from Broadway, jazz and classical music to receive the Kennedy Center Honors Sunday night for their influence on American culture through the arts.

Caroline Kennedy, who hosts the annual show as part of a living memorial to her assassinated father, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, acknowledged her personal connection to one honoree.

In a nod to Diamond, she said he was “a Brooklyn lad with a gift of melody who grew into a solitary man, reaching out, touching me.” That was enough to draw big laughs from the crowd of celebrities and politicians recalling that Diamond’s “Sweet Caroline” was named for her.

“I’m going to have to thank her for that,” Diamond said before the show.

He noted the song is a story about him and his ex-wife. But he took the name from Kennedy.

Smokey Robinson sang “Sweet Caroline” with help from Kennedy and fans brought in from Boston’s Fenway Park where it’s a favorite anthem.

Lionel Richie, who sang, “I Am ... I Said,” told the AP that he got into the music business because he wanted to be Diamond.

“He’s a great storyteller,” Richie said. “He’s not an acrobatic singer. Basically he told the story in a very simple voice.”

Earlier, President Barack Obama lauded the actors and musicians at the White House.

“They have different talents, and they’ve traveled different paths,” Obama said. “And yet they belong here together because each of tonight’s honorees has felt the need to express themselves and share that expression with the world.”

He said everyone has that desire for self-expression in common.

“That’s why we dance, even if, as Michelle says, I look silly doing it,” he said to laughter.

Classical music stole the show’s finale with surprise tributes from Stephen Colbert—who seemed lost at first—and



Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, left, and President Bill Clinton, right, pose with the 2011 Kennedy Center Honorees, front row from left, Sonny Rollins, Barbara Cook, back row from left, Yo-Yo Ma, Meryl Streep and Neil Diamond at the State Department following a dinner and reception on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011 in Washington.

Elmo from TV’s “Sesame Street.”

“Tonight we celebrate the greatest living cellist,” Colbert said. “We celebrate, if you will.”

Ma, one of the best-known classical musicians, has played cello since he was 4. At age 7, he played for Presidents John F. Kennedy and Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Now at 56, he is hailed as a musical ambassador to the world who has spanned styles from Bluegrass to sounds from the Silk Road with an ensemble he founded. Many of his friends performed in his honor.

Elmo, dressed in a tux, said he came to honor Ma, who taught him that “music is like a playground” that makes everyone happy.

And earlier, Obama jokingly looked to Ma for some advice.

“Everybody likes him,” Obama said.

“You’ve got to give me some tips. I thought about asking him to go talk to Congress.”

CBS will broadcast the show on Dec. 27.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton flew home for less than 36 hours between diplomatic travels to honor the artists with a dinner Saturday night. After visiting the isolated Southeast Asian country of Myanmar, Clinton said such U.S. artists have worldwide influence by using their freedom of creativity.

“You may not know it, but somewhere in a little tiny room in Burma or even in North Korea, someone is desperately trying to hear you or to see you, to experience you,” Clinton said. “And if they are lucky enough to make that connection, it can literally change lives and countries.”

Shortly after, in a toast to Streep

at the State Department, writer Nora Ephron warned Clinton that the person who would someday play her on screen is the same woman who played Julia Child in “Julie and Julia” and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the upcoming “The Iron Lady.” Streep stood up for a better look at the nation’s top diplomat.

“It’s inevitable,” Ephron told Clinton, drawing big laughs. “You met her tonight, and I’m sure you thought she was charming, but she was just soaking you up.”

Streep, 62, has made more than 45 movies and won two Oscars in a career spanning Shakespeare to ABBA with the movie “Mamma Mia!” For her part, Streep said she is in awe of the accolades.

“Look where we are, look who’s here,” Streep told The Associated Press.

Indian film star Dev Anand dies in London at 88

NEW DELHI (AP)—Bollywood star Dev Anand, a charismatic and flamboyant Indian film fixture for more than a half-century, has died of a heart attack in London, his family said Sunday. He was 88.

Famed for his roles in dozens of movies, including “Jewel Thief” and “Guide,” the veteran actor, director and producer was working up to the last minute, with a new script in the works.

Anand lived and died on “his own terms,” his nephew and renowned film director Shekhar Kapur said in a posting on Twitter. “He was working one minute. Sat down and smiled. And was gone the next. So much to learn.”

Anand died of a heart attack Saturday night in a hotel in London, where he had gone recently for a medical checkup, the family said.

India’s prime minister joined Indian film stars and officials in lauding Anand’s achievements and expressing sorrow for his death.

“Dev Anand was a great artist who entertained generations of cinema lovers over five decades,” Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said in a statement. “He was an embodiment of long passion for acting and film-making. I join millions of his fans in mourning his death.”

Born on Sept. 26, 1923, as the son of a Punjab lawyer, Anand studied English literature and law, eventually moving in his early 20s to India’s film capital of Mumbai, then called Bombay, where he pursued a love of acting.

Known for his good looks, melodious voice and success in romantic leads, Anand was considered a superstar within just a few years of his 1946 screen debut in the Hindi-language film “Hum Ek Hain.”

Others in his family followed, with his brothers Chetan and Vijay also winning praise as film producers, screenwriters and directors.

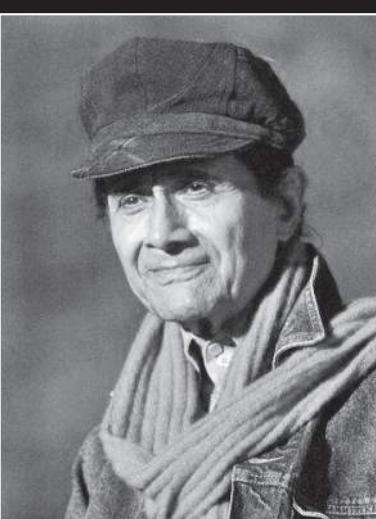
Dev Anand also began producing in 1949, and made his directorial debut in 1971 with the popular hippie cult film “Hare Rama Hare Krishna.”

Never giving up the career, Anand released his latest film, “Chargesheet,” just a few months ago and was reportedly working on another script when he died.

On his birthday in September, the upbeat actor told the Press Trust of India that he still had more to offer.

“My life is the same, and I am at a beautiful stage at 88,” he reportedly said in the interview. “I am as excited as I was in my 20s. I have so many things to do,” including a sequel to his 1971 film that he had titled “Hare Rama Hare Krishna Aaj.”

Anand was given several prizes during his career, including lifetime achievement awards by Filmfare in 1993 and Screen Videocon in 1996. His 2007 memoirs, titled “Romancing With Life,” underlined his belief



In this Sunday, Jan. 14, 2007 file photo, Bollywood star Dev Anand takes part in the Mumbai Festival in Mumbai, India. According to media reports, Anand died of a heart attack in a London hospital Saturday, Dec. 3, 2011. He was 88.

in making films that were socially relevant.

Also known for social work, Anand

“It’s overwhelming. I feel very proud.”

On Sunday, Emily Blunt and Anne Hathaway from “The Devil Wears Prada,” joined Kevin Kline and Stanley Tucci for a musical tribute to Streep.

Sarah Jessica Parker and Matthew Broderick opened the tributes to Broadway singer Barbara Cook, recalling the days when they first started dating and went to hear Cook sing at the Cafe Carlyle in New York.

“I don’t think Matthew at the time knew what kind of special memory he was creating for us,” Parker said.

“Oh, I knew,” Broderick said back.

Cook, 84, made her Broadway debut in 1951, and later Leonard Bernstein cast her in his musical “Candide.” She topped that performance as Marian the Librarian in 1957’s hit musical “The Music Man,” for which she won a Tony Award.

A film tribute noted Cook went silent for a decade, due to drinking and depression, but she came back.

Glenn Close called her an icon for anyone who has worked on Broadway.

“I think we have the biggest respect for her because she really has survived, survived and prevailed,” Close said.

Another honoree was Sonny Rollins, 81, a jazz saxophonist who has shared the stage with Miles Davis and Dizzy Gillespie, among others.

“America is the home of jazz. It’s what we started,” he said. “By the way, hip hop music is a part of jazz, believe it or not.”

Friend Bill Cosby marveled about how he has heard Rollins’ distinctive sax around the world in Greece, Hong Kong, Italy—and found so many people who knew the musician’s work.

“All over the world, Sonny Rollins,” Cosby said.

Benny Golson and Herbie Hancock joined in playing some of Rollins’ tunes.

Fellow sax player President Bill Clinton said earlier that he has been a fan since the age of 15 or 16 when he bought his first Rollins LP and played it until it was worn out.

“His music can bend your mind, it can break your heart, and it can make you laugh out loud,” Clinton said. “He has done things with improvisation that really no one has ever done.”

dabbled in politics in the 1970s, launching a short-lived political party and leading other film stars in opposing then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi’s “Emergency” regime, which gave her the power to rule by decree.

“With his death, an era has come to an end. For a career spanning more than five decades, Dev Anand gave us films which will stay entrenched in our minds for years on,” Information and Broadcasting Minister Ambika Soni said in a statement carried by Press Trust of India. “He was truly a multifaceted performer as an actor, director and producer.”

Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan said in a posting on Twitter that Anand’s death “leaves a void never perhaps to be filled again.”

Prize-winning British-Indian novelist Salman Rushdie lamented in a post: “I grew up watching your films. Sorry to say goodbye.”

Anand’s family plans to cremate his body in London on Tuesday or Wednesday.



Director Madonna attends a special screening of "W.E." at the Museum of Modern Art on Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011 in New York.

Singer Mindy McCready's 5-year-old son in custody

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—By the time Arkansas authorities took country singer Mindy McCready's 5-year-old son from her and into custody on Friday evening, one thing had already become apparent to many in America: McCready's life has come to resemble a bad country song.

Since her emergence in the mid-1990s as a honey-voiced success story out of Nashville, McCready has been increasingly known for her personal foibles instead of her music.

This week's custody battle was the latest in a long saga of personal heartache and brushes with the law.

Florida Department of Children and Families spokeswoman

Terri Durdaller wrote in an email Saturday that her agency was working with Arkansas state officials to bring McCready's son, Zander, back to her legal guardian in Florida. His maternal grandmother has been Zander's guardian since 2007.

Officials say he's safe and in good health. "Zander is in Arkansas and we continue to arrange his swift arrival back to Florida," Durdaller wrote.

In Arkansas, Cleburne County Sheriff Marty Moss said Saturday that McCready didn't have permission to be in the unoccupied summer home where she was found Friday evening with her son. Authorities continue to investigate the matter, he said.

The sheriff's office said in

a news release Saturday that it was known McCready had been a visitor to the area and that deputies were working with the U.S. Marshals Service to see if the singer might be there. Authorities located McCready after receiving a report of "possible

occupants in a summer home that was supposed to be unoccupied," the news release said.

Authorities said officers entered the home and found McCready and her son in a bedroom closet. A man, David Wilson, was also in the residence. Moss said neither had permission to be in the residence, but neither was arrested at the time.

Moss told the Associated Press on Saturday that the house where all three were found is next door

to one where Wilson has stayed in the past. He said he doesn't know if McCready is still in the area and doesn't expect that she will face any charges for being at the unoccupied home.

"I don't expect that to happen," Moss said.

Gayle Inge, Zander's grandmother and McCready's mother, was tearful when she talked about the news by phone Friday night with The Associated Press.

"I'm real excited that he's safe," she said. "But I can't explain what this is like. We feel for Mindy and we feel for Zander."

Inge said that her son—McCready's half-brother—texted McCready, who responded with a text that said her mother would never see her again.

Ferrell's 'Billion Dollar Movie' heads to Sundance

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Here's a dream come true for cash-strapped filmmakers: A billion-dollar movie budget.

Next month's Sundance Film Festival, the top showcase for independent cinema, includes the comedy "Tim and Eric's Billion Dollar Movie." It's the story of two filmmakers who get the most colossal budget ever, only to have it all go wrong.

The movie, one of dozens announced Thursday by Robert Redford's Sundance festival, features Will Ferrell, John C. Reilly, Zach Galifianakis. Its writer-directors are Tim Heidecker and Eric Wareheim, a comedy duo whose credits include the TV series "Tim and Eric Awesome Show, Great Job!"

"Billion Dollar Movie" is part of the festival's popular midnight section of horror, over-the-top comedy and other high-energy films.

Among other midnight titles are director Jon Wright's horror comedy "Grabbers," starring Richard Coyle and Ruth Bradley in the tale of villagers in an Irish fishing town who learn that



In this July 22, 2008, file photo, actors John C. Reilly, left, and Will Ferrell pose backstage at MTV Studio's in Times Square for MTV's "Total Request Live" show in New York.

like it kind of crazy," Groth said. "Hopefully, it'll keep you awake. For me, it's the stuff that really pushes the envelope. The more outrageous it is for me, the better. I really want to be shocked or surprised or laugh so hard that I pass out."

Sundance announced several other film categories Thursday, including a program of micro-budgeted movies. Though the films typically are shot for only a few hundred-thousand dollars, that lineup has a few name-brand stars.

Among them are Lauren Am-

brose and Carol Kane in directors Mike Birbiglia and Seth Barrish's "Sleepwalk with Me," about a standup comedian's battle with sleepwalking; and Anne Heche in Carrie Preston's "That's What She Said," about two friends and a stranger who embark on romantic misadventures in New York City.

Sundance runs Jan. 19-29 in Park City, Utah.

The festival announced its U.S. and world competition films Wednesday and will unveil its star-studded premieres Monday.

Among them are Lauren Am-

Madonna to perform at halftime of Super Bowl

NEW YORK (AP)—The Material Girl will be taking the stage on football's biggest night.

Madonna, who has sold more than 300 million records, will perform at halftime of the Super Bowl in Indianapolis. The NFL and NBC announced Sunday during the Detroit-New Orleans game that the Grammy Award-winning singer will highlight the show at Lucas Oil Stadium on Feb. 5.

The show is the most-watched musical event of the year, with more than 162 million in the U.S. tuning in to see The Black Eyed Peas' performance with Slash and Usher in Dallas at halftime of Green Bay's Super Bowl win over Pittsburgh last February.

Madonna, a Rock & Roll Hall of Fame inductee, will join such acts as Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band, Prince, U2, Paul McCartney, The Who and the Rolling Stones to perform during recent Super Bowls. She will collaborate with a team from Cirque du Soleil, choreographer Jamie King, and artists from Moment Factory.

Madonna, currently in the studio working on a new album, has a new film "W.E." which she directed, wrote and produced and will open nationally two days before the NFL's signature event.

The Super Bowl and halftime show, sponsored by Bridgestone Americas, will be broadcast worldwide on NBC.

Airlines are thinking small as Americans are getting big

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: This letter is to offer sympathy to "Trish in Louisiana" (Sept. 25), who was seated next to two large passengers on a three-hour flight. It has happened to me.

The airlines control the size and weight of baggage, whether it's checked or carry-on, and charge when it's overweight. So why do they turn a blind eye when it comes to passengers who must endure being crowded out of the seats we have paid for? If airlines aren't willing to screen passengers for size, perhaps they should provide a few rows of larger seats to accommodate them.

Airlines have sacrificed comfort for economy to the point that the seats are simply too small. I'm an average-size woman, but I find the seats are barely large enough. They're crowded so close together you can't move your legs, and they don't actually recline. I agree with your advice to speak up if you find yourself being squeezed.

ELLEN IN LAS CRUCES

DEAR ELLEN: While your letter reflects the views of many readers, they ALL emphatically agree that airlines need to do a better job of customer service regarding the seating on passenger planes. My newspaper readers comment:

DEAR ABBY: As America grows larger, airline seats grow smaller. Trish was right to be compassionate. If airlines treat large people (who are also paying customers) like dirt so they can turn a profit by squeezing passengers into every inch of space, they are WRONG.

There are ways to be creative and not humiliate anyone. The flight attendant could have moved a child to her seat with Mom across the aisle.

I recommend that flight attendants think along those lines, because having a gate attendant drag people off flights is not the best way to handle this and should only be a last resort. We're all customers, and we all deserve to be treated with dignity.

MARY IN VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.

DEAR ABBY: The fault lies with airline management. They should specify up front in their ad campaigns that if the passengers' dimensions exceed certain parameters, they must buy two tickets.

COMFORTABLE ON THE GROUND

DEAR ABBY: My heart goes out to all three. I am a plus-size woman and my husband is "normal" size. His field is marketing, and I showed him your letter. He said recent surveys have shown that one-third of people who refuse to fly do so because of the tight seating, and not fear of an accident. Airlines pack people in like sardines to make more money, and it is resented.

I quit flying years ago because of claustrophobia. If I had to fly now, I'd buy a first-class ticket. I wonder why the planes don't have six or eight seats in the back of coach that are larger and cost more money, but less than first class.

Something has to be done to make flying safer and more comfortable for everyone. Surely we have the intellectual capacity to solve these problems.

NO LONGER A FREQUENT FLYER IN NEW YORK

DEAR ABBY: It's unfortunate that Trish didn't stick to her guns and continue with her complaint. I believe airlines should head these problems off at the gate. They have a box to check the size of carry-on luggage; they should also have a passenger seat to check the size of people. If someone doesn't fit, then that person must buy an additional ticket for a second seat.

REFUSES TO BE SQUISHED

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write *Dear Abby* at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two books: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by *Dear Abby*." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$12 (U.S. funds) to: *Dear Abby—Cookbooklet Set*, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in price.)

Pastimes

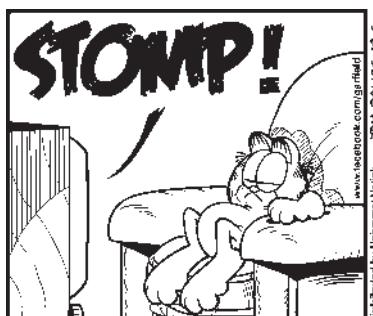
Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson



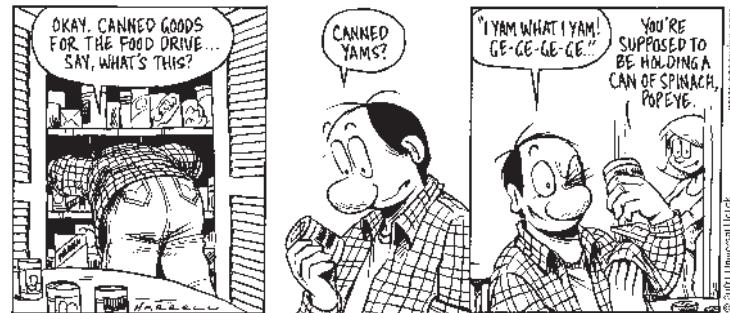
Garfield®



By Jim Davis



Adam@home



By Bryan Basset



The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	38	"Hammer- in' Hank"	3	Vibra- phonist	24	Parcel of land
1	Weak, as an excuse	41	Neither mate	25	By way of	
5	Thickness	42	That woman	26	Proof letters	
8	Amble	45	Huff and puff	27	Apply lightly	
12	Wicked	46	Sudden violent wind	28	Kind of dye	
13	Tall tale	47	GE-GE-GE-GE	29	Kitten's remark	
14	Press	48	Facility	30	Crucial	
15	"The Glass Menagerie"	49	High card	31	Neb.	
16	playwright	50	Flame	32	neighbor	
17	Building block	51	Rip	33	British noble	
18	name	52	Firma- ment	37	Like Swiss cheese	
19	Old insecticide	53	Rock band's	38	Help a hood	
20	Conk out	20	accessories	39	Wings	
21	Explosion	21	Greet the villain	40	Parks or Bonheur	
22	Moist Luau bowlful	22	Energetic determination	41	Shaving mishap	
23	Lisa Marie's dad	23	Boxer	42	Take to the pool	
24	Former	24	Eager, plus	43	Angel's instrument	
30	Work hard	25	Type squares	44	Rams' mates	
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32	Stare	27		47	"— picture paints a thousand words ..."	
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Solution time: 21 mins.



Yesterday's answer 12-6

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Lindsay Price, 35; Judd Apatow, 44; Tom Hulce, 58; JoBeth Williams, 63.

Happy Birthday: If you share your knowledge and experience with someone you feel can offer you something in return this year, you will find satisfaction as you move ahead personally and professionally. Align with people and places conducive to reaching your dreams, hopes and wishes. Once you begin walking down the right path, you will flourish. Your numbers are 8, 14, 18, 26, 32, 39, 43.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Use your personal experience to get ahead professionally. Set up meetings and play an aggressive role in getting what you want, when you want it. Your spirit will raise greater interest in what you have to offer. Show your skills proudly. **★★★**

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Let your feelings be known. Don't be shy or too stubborn to admit what's on your mind and what you intend to do. Meetings will bring good results and allow you to find out who wants to get involved in your plans. **★★★**

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You must deal with red tape, institutional matters or government agencies quickly. Someone will not be happy with a decision you make regarding a partnership. Don't be too hasty to make a deal or you will give up too much for too little. **★★★**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Getting involved in a worthy cause will lead to all sorts of perks. Not only will you meet

someone stellar, but you will also discover potential partnerships that can help you get ahead financially. Love is highlighted. **★★★**

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Have fun in the company of those who share your interests. Shopping will be exhausting and could be expensive. Budget wisely and keep your expenditures to a minimum. You don't have to impress anyone. **★★**

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You need to get out and experience new people, places and things. A heartfelt matter can be addressed. Plans to get involved in something you believe in will lead to greater knowledge and the opportunity to expand your interests. **★★★★**

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Put more focus on your personal finances, finding ways to lower your taxes and improve your home. Letting others determine what you can do will be your downfall. Do research and make decisions that will benefit you, not others. **★★**

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Live, love and laugh, but most of all, get involved in things that make you happy. Passionate times will bring back fond memories and open up future opportunities. Set the wheels in motion now for what you would like to see happen. **★★**

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take any precautions necessary when it comes to travel or experimenting with activities that involve an element of danger. You don't have to show off. Everyone will love you for your wit, intelligence and playful personality. **★★★★**

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Rely on the past to help you make the right choices now. Someone may confuse you, but if you talk to a trusted friend who knows your situation, you will find a way to move forward. Love is on the rise. **★★★★**

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Take precautions when dealing with people you have an emotional connection to. Don't make promises that will be too difficult to keep or offer to pay for something you cannot afford. Call the shots instead of taking orders. **★★**

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't let financial uncertainty get you down. Seek extra work or find a way to offer your services in different circles. Diversity will keep you ahead and ease stress. Setting a new budget will help stretch your income. **★★**

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Rely on the past to help you make the right choices now. Someone may confuse you, but if you talk to a trusted friend who knows your situation, you will find a way to move forward. Love is on the rise. **★★★★**

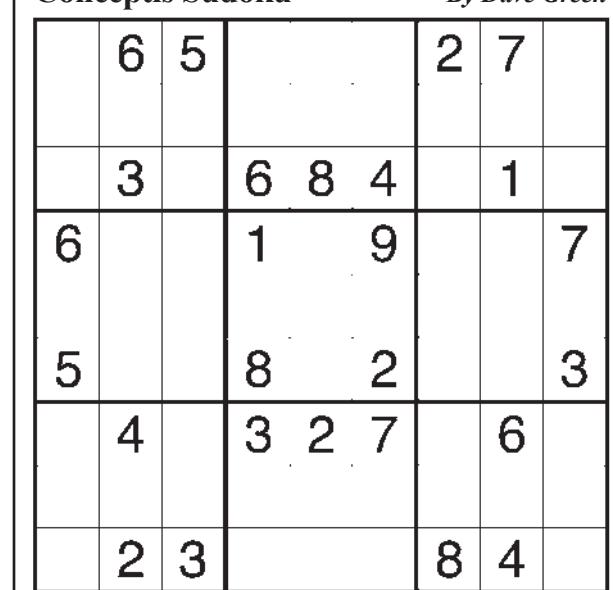
Birthday Baby: You are engaging, progressive and adamant when you want something.

Eugenia's Web sites: eugenialast.com for confidential consultations, myspace.com/eugenialast for Eugenia's blog, astroadvice.com for fun

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

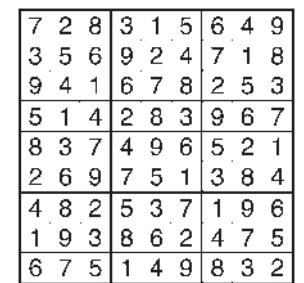
By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



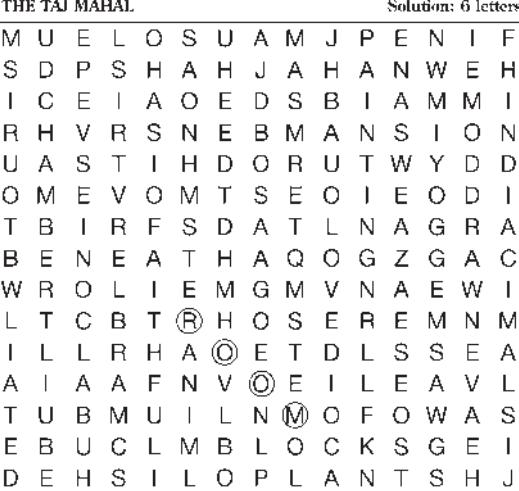
Difficulty Level ★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters

SOLUTION: 6 letters



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Admired, Agra, Balconies, Beneath, Blocks, Bronze, Built, Chamber, Crown, Cube, Detail, Dome, Faithful, Fine, Garden, Gems, Gold, Heavenly, Hind, Horn, Host, Islamic, Iwan, Jade, Jewel, Lives, Love, Mansion, Marble, Mausoleum, Mirarets, Money, Motifs, Painting, Pishtaq, Plants, Polished, Pools, Room, Sandstone, Shah Jahan, Shiva, Terms, Tomb, Tourism, View, Vine
Yesterday's Answer: Newcomer

To order THE SELECTED WORDS TO USE, call 1-800-226-5955 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

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STUMPED?

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Tiger Woods ends 2-year victory drought



THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. (AP)—After going more than two years and 26 tournaments

without a win, and after so much turmoil in his personal life and with his golf game, Tiger Woods stood over a 6-foot birdie putt Sunday to win the Chevron World Challenge and felt as though nothing had changed.

Finally, the outcome was familiar, too.

Woods poured in the putt to cap off a birdie-birdie finish at Sherwood, close with a 3-under 69 and beat former Masters champion Zach Johnson by one shot. The win ended a drought that lasted 749 days, and might have signaled a change that Woods is on his way back.

He swept his arm across the air, yelled through the din of the gallery and slammed his fist in a celebration that was a long time coming.

Relief? Satisfaction? Vindication?

Woods wasn't sure, and he didn't much care.

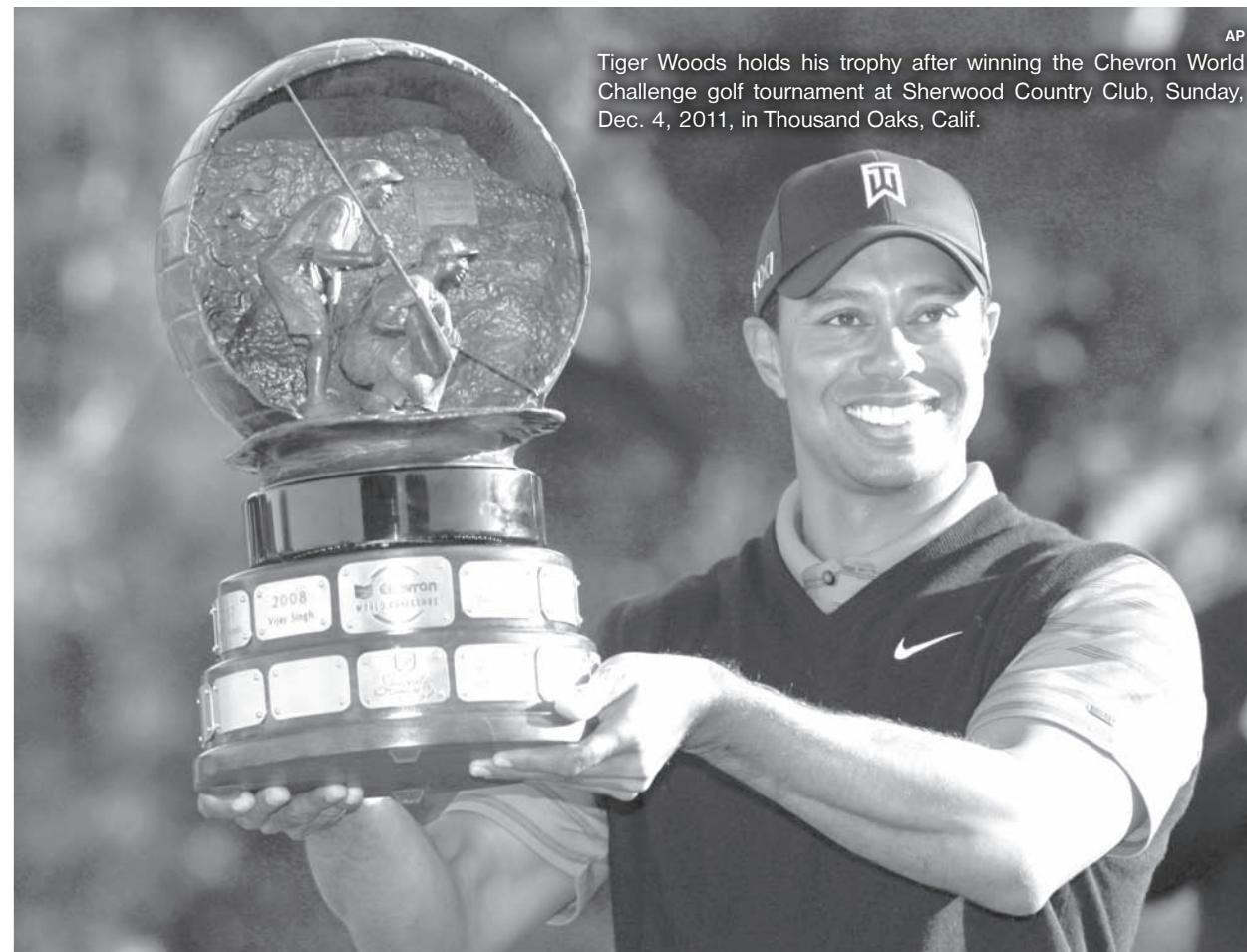
"It just feels awesome whatever it is," he said.

Trailing by one shot with two holes to play, Woods came up with two clutch putts. He holed a 15-footer for birdie on the par-3 17th to pull into a tie with Johnson, then hit a 9-iron from 158 yards that landed on the ridge behind the hole and rolled down to 6 feet.

"I've been in contention twice this year, which is not very often," Woods said. "So that's my third time with a chance to win it. I pulled it off this time."

It was his 83rd win worldwide in tournaments that award ranking points, but his first since he won the Australian Masters on Nov. 15, 2009, back when he looked as though he would rule golf for as long as he played.

But he crashed his car into a fire hydrant outside his Florida home on Thanksgiving night, and shocking revelations of extramarital affairs began to emerge, which shattered his image, led to a divorce and cost him four major sponsors. Since then, he



Tiger Woods holds his trophy after winning the Chevron World Challenge golf tournament at Sherwood Country Club, Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011, in Thousand Oaks, Calif. AP

has changed swing coaches, caddies and endured more injuries, causing him to miss two majors and fail to make the cut in another.

Now, however, it looks clear that Woods is on an upward path.

"If the man is healthy, that's paramount," Johnson said. "I mean, he's the most experienced and the best player I've ever played with. In every situation, he knows how to execute and win."

Even though those situations have been rare, Woods looked as though he had not forgotten how to win. The only other times he has been in contention this year were the Masters and the Australian Open.

"I felt normal, felt very comfortable," Woods said. "I've been here so many times that, you know, I just feel very comfortable being here in this position. Was I nervous? Absolutely. Always nervous in that position. But it's a

comfortable feeling, and I enjoy being in that position. For some reason, it's kind of a comfort to be in there with a chance to win."

Woods won the Chevron World Challenge, which he hosts for his foundation, for the fifth time. He finished at 10-under 278 and donated the \$1.2 million to his foundation.

The win moved him from No. 52 to No. 21 in the world ranking, and likely will send expectations soaring for 2012. Woods will not play again until starting his year in Abu Dhabi at the end of January.

If this win felt differently than the last one, Woods wasn't saying.

"They all feel good," he said. "They're not easy. People don't realize how hard it is to win golf tournaments. I've gone on streaks where I've won golf tournaments in a row, but still ... I don't think I've taken it for granted. And I know be-

cause of how hard it is."

He had a worthy adversary in Johnson, who had a one-shot lead going into the final round and trailed for only three holes. Johnson tied Woods with a birdie on the par-5 13th, made an unlikely par on the 14th by chipping from the bottom of the green, and appeared to seize control by holing a 12-foot birdie putt on the 16th hole.

Johnson thought his birdie putt on the 17th was good all the way until it burned the edge of the cup. Woods, running out of time, drained his birdie putt to force a tie and send the tournament to the 18th. Johnson missed a 15-foot birdie try, leaving the stage to Woods.

Johnson closed with a 71 and still took home \$650,000 for the holidays. Paul Casey, who opened with a 79, had his third straight round in the 60s to finish alone in third at 5 under.

"Tiger can have a long career," Casey

Reyes, Marlins agree to \$106M deal



DALLAS (AP)—All-

Star shortstop Jose Reyes and the Miami Marlins provided quite a warmup for the winter meetings.

A day before the annual swap session officially began, the NL batting champion and the Marlins reached agreement on a \$106 million, six-year deal, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press on Sunday night.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the free-agent deal had not yet been announced.

The 28-year-old Reyes had spent his entire career with the New York Mets. But the Marlins courted him hard, even though they already had All-Star shortstop Hanley Ramirez. Reyes will join another key free-agent acquisition, All-Star closer Heath Bell, when the Marlins

move into their new ballpark next year.

Reyes, Albert Pujols and Prince Fielder were the top free agents available going into the weekend, all with a chance of finding a landing spot for the future. Gil Hodges, Ron Santo and Minnie Minoso could lock up a legacy forever this week.

Baseball's four-day gathering starts in earnest Monday, and speculation about more moves was rampant.

Will the New York Yankees work out a swap for Cubs pitcher Matt Garza? Will some bullpen add A's All-Star closer Andrew Bailey? Will C.J. Wilson or Mark Buehrle strike riches?

A couple of trades have already been made since Pujols and the St. Louis Cardinals won the World Series. Huge swaps, not yet.

Going into the weekend, Mets general manager Sandy Alderson had a theory on why there

had been a lack of movement.

"It may have something to do with the top free agents not having moved, Pujols and Fielder and Jose Reyes," Alderson said then. "It may just be the tension—not the tension, but the dynamic between clubs and free agents. The free agents would like to think that a certain market exists. And the clubs, at this point, are holding out some hope that that market doesn't exist."

"But it can all change in three days in Dallas," he said.

As Alderson's team discovered, it can happen even faster than that.

Surely, there were other general managers itching to get busy. Six teams have hired new GMs, and Houston will become the seventh.

A big name who will be available, if any team wants to take the risk: Manny Ramirez.

Major League Baseball an-

nounced Sunday the All-Star slugger had applied to be reinstated from the voluntary retired list and his drug suspension had been cut from 100 games to 50.

MLB and the players' union agreed to trim the penalty because he sat out most of last season, when he played a week for Tampa Bay. He turns 40 in May and has 555 career home runs.

Detroit manager Jim Leyland was among the early arrivals Sunday at the 1,606-room Anatole, a familiar baseball site. The hotel is hosting the meetings for the sixth time—inside its walls

in 2000, more than a half-billion dollars was spent in a hurry as Alex Rodriguez, Manny Ramirez and Mike Hampton each got nine-figure contracts.

Last year's meetings got off to a rousing start, too, when free-agent outfielder Jayson Werth and the Washington Nationals reached a \$126 million, seven-year deal. The agreement came on a Sunday, a day before the official opening. In fact, workmen were still assembling

the podium when the Nationals and agent Scott Boras walked into the press room to make the announcement.

Also in town early this year were former Atlanta Braves and Washington Nationals president Stan Kasten, and Chicago White Sox special assistant Dennis Gilbert, both part of groups lining up to bid for the Los Angeles Dodgers in U.S. Bankruptcy Court.

Kasten is aligned with former Los Angeles Lakers star Magic Johnson and investor Mark Walter in a group called Guggenheim Baseball Management. Gilbert, a former agent, is aligned with former talk show host Larry King and Jason Reese of Imperial Capital.

Earlier Sunday, representatives from MLB and the umpires' union met, and replay was a prominent subject. Baseball is still figuring out when and how to expand the system, with fair-or-foul calls and trapped balls likely to be reviewed next season. Also

said when he finished. "We might look back in another 10 years and actually forget about the last couple of years."

Woods had a four-shot lead over Graeme McDowell a year ago, a margin that evaporated quickly when Woods showed early signs of a struggle, particularly with a pair of three-putts. There was no such evidence this time.

After nearly driving into trouble to the right of the par-5 second, Woods escaped and hit wedge to 3 1/2 feet for birdie. His lone bogey on the front nine came at the par-3 eighth, with a back right pin that requires a fade. Woods tugged it well left of the green, and his pitch at a 45-degree angle was too strong and rolled into the fringe about 15 feet away.

Johnson's chip on the third was too strong, he three-putted from about 35 feet for bogey on the fifth and he played a poor chip from below the eighth green for another bogey.

They were tied at the turn when Woods began to pull away. From the right rough, Woods hit a soft sand wedge that landed in the first cut short of the green and fed down the slope to about 4 feet. He two-putted from long range for birdie on the par-5 11th to stretch his lead to two shots when Johnson caught a buried lie in the bunker.

Woods bogeyed the 12th from a bunker, though, and Johnson's birdie on the 13th set up a final hour that was up for grabs until Woods came through in the clutch on the last two holes.

Woods' tournament, which has an 18-man field, has been a good omen for others over the years. The most recent example was Jim Furyk, who won in 2009 and then had his first three-win season the next year and captured the FedEx Cup.

No one ever imagined Woods needing a boost, but that might be the case.

"I don't think we're going to see another 2011, if that makes sense," Furyk said, alluding to Woods failing to reach the FedEx Cup playoffs this year. "If he steadily progresses, keeps getting confidence and moving forward, he's going to return and be one of the best players in the game again."

under discussion is how to pick umpires for extra wild-card playoff games that could occur as early as next year.

On Monday morning, history is at stake. The Hall of Fame's Veterans Committee will reveal whether it has elected any new members.

Hodges, Santo, Luis Tiant and Jim Kaat are on the 10-person Golden Era ballot covering 1947-72. The 16-member voting panel talked about the candidates Sunday and turned in the secret ballots. The announcement is set for 11 a.m. EST.

Minoso, Ken Boyer, Tony Oliva, Ron Santo, Charlie Finley and Buzzie Bavasi also are under consideration. It takes 75 percent for election, and those picked will be inducted into Cooperstown next July.

At next year's meetings in Nashville, Tenn., retired managers Tony La Russa, Joe Torre and Bobby Cox could gain election when the Expansion Era from 1973 on is considered.

Packers clinch playoff berth with win over Giants



EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey (AP)—Aaron Rodgers engineered a last-minute drive to set up a 31-yard field goal by Mason Crosby on the final play of regulation as the Green Bay Packers remained undefeated and clinched a playoff berth with a 38-35 victory over the New York Giants on Sunday.

Rodgers hit three passes of more than 18 yards on the drive in the final 58 seconds as the Super Bowl champion Packers (12-0) won their 18th straight game and handed the Giants (6-6) their fourth straight loss.

New York, which was blown out by New Orleans on Monday night, tied the game on Eli Manning's 2-yard touchdown pass and a 2-point conversion run by D.J. Ware with just under a minute to play.

Broncos 35, Vikings 32

In Minneapolis, Tim Tebow led yet another late rally, passing for a season-best 202 yards and two third-quarter touchdowns to help Denver win its fifth straight game.

Matt Prater kicked two field goals in the final 93 seconds for the Broncos (7-5), who moved into a first-place tie in the AFC West with a loss by the Oakland Raiders. Christian Ponder set Minnesota's single-game rookie record with 381 yards passing, including a pair of touchdowns to Percy Harvin, but his sideline throw with 1:33 remaining was intercepted by Andre Goodman to set up the winner.

Steelers 35, Bengals 7

In Pittsburgh, Ben Roethlisberger passed for two touchdowns and set a team record for career completions against error-prone Cincinnati.

Pittsburgh (9-3) swept the season series from Cincinnati (7-5) for the second straight year behind a 28-point explosion in the second



Green Bay Packers' Mason Crosby celebrates with teammates after kicking the game-winning field goal during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game against the New York Giants on Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011, in East Rutherford, N.J. AP

quarter fueled by Roethlisberger, running back Rashard Mendenhall and a 60-yard punt return for a score by Antonio Brown.

Mendenhall and wide receiver Mike Wallace scored two touchdowns for the Steelers, who won for the seventh time in their last eight games.

Cardinals 19, Cowboys 13, OT

In Glendale, Arizona, LaRod Stephens-Howling caught a short pass from Kevin Kolb and zipped 52 yards for a touchdown in overtime, snapping Dallas' four-game winning streak.

It marked the third time since 2008 that the Cowboys have lost in Arizona in excruciating fashion.

Stephens-Howling dodged a host of would-be Cowboys tacklers to scamper in with the score. Kolb completed 16 of 25 for 247 yards in his first game in five weeks.

Texans 17, Falcons 10

In Houston, rookie T.J. Yates threw a touchdown pass in his first NFL start and Arian Foster rushed for 111 yards as Houston overcame another hamstring injury to Andre Johnson.

The Texans (9-3) have won a franchise-record six straight games, a remarkable feat considering they're down to their third-string quarterback and have played the bulk of their streak without their star receiver.

Johnson left in the third quarter after hurting his left hamstring. He injured his right hamstring in Week 4 and sat out six games.

49ers 26, Rams 0

In San Francisco, Frank Gore ran San Francisco right into the playoffs, becoming the 49ers' career rushing leader in a shutout that wrapped up the franchise's first

Tony Romo was 28 for 42 for 299 yards for the Cowboys.

NFC West crown and postseason berth since 2002.

Alex Smith threw second-half touchdowns of 52 and 56 yards to Michael Crabtree and Kyle Williams and David Akers kicked four field goals for San Francisco (10-2) as coach Jim Harbaugh joined George Seifert (1989) and Steve Mariucci (1997) as the only rookie coaches in 49ers history to win the division.

Saints 31, Lions 17

In New Orleans, Drew Brees passed for 342 yards and three touchdowns as New Orleans won its fourth straight game.

Brees' performance gave him 4,031 yards on the season, making him the first quarterback in NFL history to eclipse the 4,000-yard mark in the first 12 games of a season.

His touchdown passes went for 67 yards to Robert Meachem, 20 yards to Lance Moore and 6 yards to Darren Sproles. He also

connected eight times with tight end Jimmy Graham for 89 yards as the Saints (9-3) improved to 6-0 at home.

Patriots 31, Colts 24

In Foxborough, Massachusetts, Rob Gronkowski caught two touchdown passes then scored on a lateral as New England withstood a fourth-quarter rally to keep Indianapolis winless.

Trailing 31-3, the Colts rallied with a touchdown run by Donald Brown and two scoring passes from Dan Orlovsky to Pierre Garcon, the last a 40-yarder with 36 seconds to go. But Deion Branch recovered the onside kick and Tom Brady took a knee on the final play.

Dolphins 34, Raiders 14

In Miami, Reggie Bush rushed for 100 yards and a touchdown as Miami won for the fourth time in the past five games.

Matt Moore had a hand in two TDs for Miami, and Kevin Burnett returned an interception 34 yards for a score.

The surge by the Dolphins (4-8) comes after they lost their first seven games. In the past five games they've outscored opponents 139-54, with the lone loss a one-point defeat at Dallas on Thanksgiving.

Titans 23, Bills 17

In Orchard Park, New York, Chris Johnson rushed for 153 yards and two touchdowns as Tennessee remained in the playoff chase.

Johnson scored on runs of 48 and 4 yards to match his season touchdown total. It was his third 100-yard rushing game in four outings.

Rob Bironas hit three field goals, including a 44-yarder midway through the fourth quarter to put the Titans (7-5) ahead 23-10.

Chiefs 10, Bears 3

In Chicago, Tyler Palko shook

off two miserable starts and threw for 157 yards and a touchdown even though he was briefly lifted for Kyle Orton.

Orton came on to start the second quarter and immediately left the game with an injured finger on his right hand. Palko connected with Dexter McCluster on a wild 38-yard pass to end the first half on a ball that got deflected by Brian Urlacher and Chris Conte, giving the Chiefs a 7-3 lead and their first touchdown in three games.

Kansas City (5-7) got a 21-yard field goal from Ryan Succop in the third quarter, and Jon McGraw intercepted struggling backup Caleb Hanie in the end zone in the fourth.

Jets 34, Redskins 19

In Landover, Maryland, Mark Sanchez hit Santonio Holmes for a 30-yard touchdown pass with 4:49 to play, and Shonn Greene added a pair of insurance scores.

It was Sanchez's 10th career fourth-quarter comeback or overtime victory, including playoffs, and his second in as many weeks.

The win improves the Jets to 7-5 and keeps them in the hunt for an AFC playoff berth.

Ravens 24, Browns 10

In Cleveland, Ray Rice rushed for a career-high 204 yards, breaking loose on a game-changing 67-yarder in the third quarter as Baltimore kept pace with Pittsburgh atop the AFC North.

Rice and Ricky Williams had short touchdown runs and Lardarius Webb returned a punt 68 yards for a TD for the Ravens (9-3), who toyed with the Browns (4-8). Baltimore racked up 290 yards rushing.

The Ravens turned to Rice on a blustery, rainy day, when Joe Flacco had trouble throwing and kicker Billy Cundiff missed a pair of field goal attempts.

Rematch: LSU vs Alabama in BCS title game

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP COLLEGE FOOTBALL WRITER



Play it again, LSU and Alabama. The Crimson Tide edged out Oklahoma State in the final round of voting Sunday and will play the top-ranked Tigers in the BCS national championship game on Jan. 9 in New Orleans.

Undefeated LSU is the only team to beat Alabama this season, and the head BCS official sees a do-over as a perfectly good title game.

"Absolutely, if they're 1 and 2, and they are in all the polls released today," executive director Bill Hancock said.

Still, it's not exactly a game the public was clamoring for—at least outside of Southeastern Conference territory. And it will do nothing to quiet the critics of the Bowl Championship Series or the calls for a college football playoff.

But like it or not, the system has ensured that the SEC—home to both schools—will run its streak of BCS championships to six in a row.

The Cowboys made a late surge by beating Oklahoma 44-10 on Saturday night, and closed

the gap between themselves and Alabama in the polls. But it was not enough to avoid the first title game rematch in the 14-year history of the BCS.

The Tigers (13-0) beat the Tide 9-6 in overtime on Nov. 5 in Tuscaloosa.

"This could be a totally different type of game," Alabama coach Nick Saban said. "There's so many good players on both sides of the ball for both teams."

"There's so much opportunity for this game to play out completely different and have a completely different flavor than the first game."

Alabama (11-1) finished second in both the Harris and coaches' polls by a wide enough margin to make up for the fact that Oklahoma State was ahead in the computer ratings.

The Cowboys (11-1), champions of the Big 12, will play in the Fiesta Bowl against Stanford from the Pac-12.

"We can't control it," Oklahoma State quarterback Brandon Weeden said. "But I know we had a heck of a year and we beat really good football teams in this conference and we're conference champions, so we did everything that we could."

The other BCS matchups are:

■ Michigan vs. Virginia Tech in the

Sugar Bowl;

■ Clemson vs. West Virginia in the Orange Bowl;

■ Oregon vs. Wisconsin in the Rose Bowl.

No BCS busters made it into the big-money games for the first time since the 2005 season, teams such as Boise State, TCU and Houston, which had a chance but lost in the Conference USA championship on Saturday to Southern Mississippi. The Cougars will now play Penn State, which dropped to the Ticket City Bowl in Dallas following the Jerry Sandusky sex abuse scandal that has overshadowed the Nittany Lions' season.

As the power-brokers in college football begin to plot how top-tier bowls will be set up in the future, the 2011 season is once more exposing the flaws in the current system.

Oklahoma State and Alabama, two teams with perfectly good arguments to play for a national championship, wound up fighting over one spot, with subjective voters and mysterious computer ratings—the formulas of which are not even publicly known—doing the choosing.

Alabama, with the nation's No. 1 defense, won out and will play for its second BCS crown in three years.

Oklahoma State, with one of the most potent offenses in the country, gets its first BCS appearance as a consolation prize.

"We wanted the opportunity to settle the debate that has gone all year about the offense in the Big 12 and the defense in the SEC," Oklahoma State coach Mike Gundy said on ESPN.

A rematch between LSU and Alabama in the title game seemed almost a foregone conclusion heading into conference championship weekend.

But with Alabama idle, Oklahoma State made one last, dramatic statement against the Sooners on Saturday night in Stillwater. And the Cowboys had an impressive resume, beating three teams ranked in the final BCS top 15. Alabama had only one such victory.

So instead of Sunday being a coronation there was drama, and another BCS controversy.

Working in Alabama's favor was its dominance throughout the season—all its victories have been by at least 16 points—and the fact that no other team has challenged LSU this season the way Heisman Trophy contender Trent Richardson and the Tide did.

The Tide and Tigers played a hard-hitting defensive slog billed as the Game of the Century. And it was exciting in the way Notre Dame and Army's scoreless tie was exciting in the 1946 version of the Game of the Century.

Cotto stops Margarito by TKO



NEW YORK (AP)—Miguel Cotto battered a one-eyed Antonio Margarito over nine lopsided rounds before winning a TKO decision at the start of the 10th in their highly anticipated rematch on Saturday at Madison Square Garden.

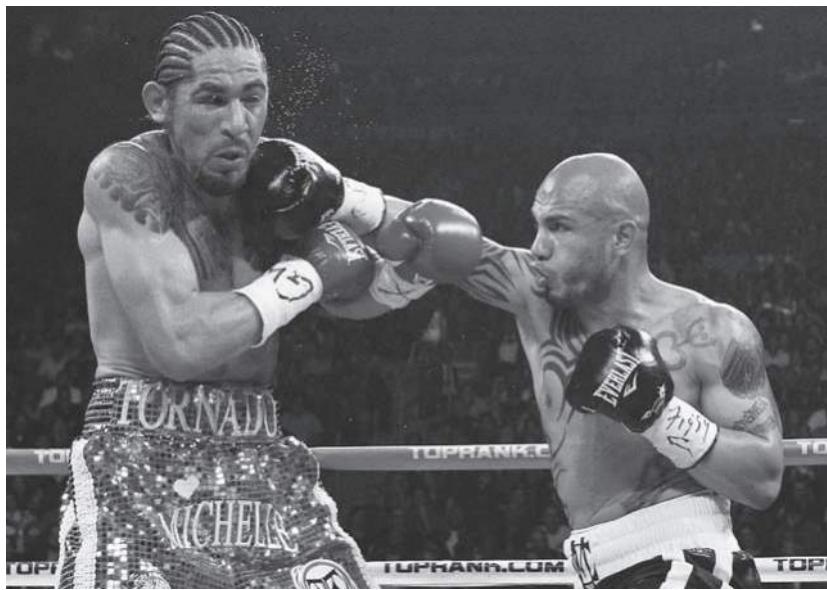
Cotto, who improved his record to 37-2-0, earned a punishing measure of payback for his loss to Margarito three years ago. The Puerto Rican fighter was never seriously threatened and easily retained his WBA super welterweight title.

Margarito beat Cotto in July 2008, only to later have his reputation tarnished when he used illegal hand wraps before a loss to Shane Mosley. Margarito didn't box again for more than a year.

The Mexican needed surgery to repair a fractured orbital bone following a loss to Manny Pacquiao last year and considered retirement. The New York State Athletic Commission didn't license Margarito until Nov. 22 after ordering another examination of his eye. Cotto took quick aim on the eye and it was swollen shut in the seventh round.

Cotto believed Margarito also used illegal hand wraps in their first fight and claimed he had the photos to prove it. He stared down Margarito in his corner after the bout was stopped.

"Just to look at him and taste my vic-



Miguel Cotto, of Puerto Rico, punches Antonio Margarito, of Mexico, during the second round of an WBA World Junior Middleweight Championship boxing match Sunday, Dec. 4, 2011 in New York.

tory on him," Cotto said. "He means nothing to me. I'm here with all my crowd and all my people. He means nothing to me."

The Tijuana Tornado stopped Cotto in the 11th round in Las Vegas in their first meeting. Cotto said he long resisted a rematch because he didn't want money going to an opponent who didn't fight fair.

The sellout crowd at MSG went wild for Cotto during Saturday's fight,

21-15, in the B division; and Obata and Sunja Kim teamed up anew in winning the A division against Bartolome and Marlene Peraja, 21-19, 21-18.

SBC was credited with three more victories in the mixed doubles event. In the C division, Boranah and Ortega nailed a two-game win over Tupaz and Yiac Caracut, 21-18, 21-12, while Bandoja and Heo also needed only two games to rule the B division against siblings Wowie and Lot Abuel, 21-9, 21-13. The

triot John Kelly (3:48:55.56), while Saipan's Andy Nutting (4:10:35.44) came in at third.

Saipan's Aldrin Sta. Ana crossed the finish line first for the 26 to 35 age group, clocking in at 3:43:52.91 and way ahead of Craig Thedwall's 4:17:26.88 and Mahesh Balakrishnan's 5:16:30.66.

The battle for first place in the 46 to 55 age group was a close one with

scorer for FGC (0-4) with 18.

Konstrak 82, Pacific Postal 74

Konstrak also remained perfect in three games after beating Pacific Postal in the second game.

Jun Estolas and Elgene Mangali teamed up in Konstrak's third victory, drilling 24 points apiece.

The game was close from start to finish with a lot of lead changes, but in the end Estolas and Mangali's superior offense powered Konstrak to the eight-point win.

Estolas made 10 points in the first period for their 21-19 cushion, before Bernardo Aquino countered in the second canto with his 10 markers to give the lead to Pacific Postal at the break, 40-39. In the third canto, Estolas and Mangali tallied six apiece, putting Konstrak back in front, 58-55. Aquino was scoreless in the third.

By the end of the third frame, MDX was way ahead, 52-28, and went into cruise control in the fourth. Alex Lauroon top-scored for MDX with 17 points, while Tenorio and Zack Babauta added 12 apiece, and Ben Lisua chipped in 11. J.R. Barrios was the lone double-figure

the fight because of the eye after 3 seconds had ticked off in the 10th round.

"It came to the point there was no vision at all from the eye," Curreri said. "I think it would have been dangerous for him to go out there without any visual field. He did go quite a bit with the eye impaired."

Referee Steve Smoger did not know what the doctor wanted, causing confusion at the end.

Margarito insisted he could continue, though he was way behind on the scorecards.

"I told them how many numbers I had up," he said. "I knew from now on they were out to protect him because I was building (momentum)."

In an undercard bout, Brandon Rios stopped John Murray in the 11th round after battering the Englishman against the ropes and forcing the referee to step in.

Rios, who now has a 29-0-1 record, had surrendered his WBA lightweight title when he failed to make the 135-pound (61-kilogram) weight Friday night. He could win the fight, just not the title.

Delvin Rodriguez beat Pawel Wolak by unanimous decision in a junior middleweight bout, landing 65 of his 101 power shots in the final round.

Also, Mike Jones won a unanimous decision over Sebastian Lujan and will get a fight for the vacant IBF welterweight title next year against Randall Bailey.

honking horns and waving Puerto Rican flags.

Margarito laughed, smiled and even taunted Cotto after suffering several big blows early on. His demeanor didn't help him at the end of the seventh round, when he sat on his corner stool, his right eye shut.

Margarito gamely fought on with one eye, hoping for that one brutal blow that could change the fight. But ring doctor Anthony Curreri stopped

A mixed doubles went the distance with Choi and Pang outlasting Arago and Naguit, 21-11, 19-21, 21-11.

The Berks Blazers earned their other point in the men's singles with Macoi Aguda winning one game against Quintu. Aguda won the second game and Quintu prevailed in the first and third, 21-17, 21-17. Lee swept the women's singles, whipping Abuel, 21-5, 21-0.

SBC's 31-2 victory was the second lopsided win it recorded in the Trad-

ers Insurance team tournament and it was a fitting end for the club's campaign in the annual competition as it was also undefeated in the elimination round. SBC advanced to the finals after crushing Shirley's Badminton Club in the semis, 32-1. The Blazers took the other semis ticket after slipping past the Golden Racquet, 17-16. Golden Racquet and Shirley's BC battled in the consolation round with the latter saving third place after an 18-15 victory.

were women's champion Maki Nonaka and Kimiko McKagan. Nonaka made the seven-hour cut after timing in at 6:28:46.88 in the 26 to 35 age group, while McKagan finished the race in under five hours with her 4:19:41.03 to win the 36 to 45 age group.

Over 150 bikers joined the around the island race and results in the mountain bike and relay events will be published in *Saipan Tribune* later this week.

Duenas 18, Mat. Duenas 14, Factor 12, Mateo 10, Lansang 8, Reyes 2.

Scoring by quarters: 22-19, 49-39, 70-65, 93-90.

SATURDAY

First Game

MDX 74 – Lauron 17, Tenorio 12, Babauta 12, Lisua 11, Park 6, Diaz 6, Palacios 4.

FGC 47 – Barrios 18, M. Capalad 8, Montano 7, W. Capalad 7, Camacho 4, Llagas 4.

Scoring by quarters: 15-13, 36-24, 52-28, 74-47.

Second Game

Konstrak 82 – Estolas 24, Mangali 24, Mallari 12, Reyes 10, Navarro 6, Dayrit 4, Morales 2.

Pacific Postal Plus 74 – Aquino 22, R. Usi 19, Aque 13, Agbanlog 9, Tenebere 6, Claveria 5.

Scoring by quarters: 21-19, 39-40, 58-55, 82-74.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	9	3	0	.750	362	247
N.Y. Jets	7	5	0	.583	290	260
Buffalo	5	7	0	.417	278	304
Miami	4	8	0	.333	246	220

South

Houston	9	3	0	.750	310	189
Tennessee	7	5	0	.583	249	229
Jacksonville	3	8	0	.273	138	200
Indianapolis	0	12	0	.000	174	358

North

Baltimore	9	3	0	.750	296	192
Pittsburgh	9	3	0	.750	268	195
Cincinnati	7	5	0	.583	266	250
Cleveland	4	8	0	.333	175	240

West

Denver	7	5	0	.583	256	292
Oakland	7	5	0	.583	274	308
Kansas City	5	7	0	.417	163	268
San Diego	4	7	0	.364	249	275

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

Dallas	7	5	0	.583	283	244
N.Y. Giants	6	6	0	.500	287	315
Philadelphia	4	8	0	.333	271	282
Washington	4	8	0	.333	202	256

South

New Orleans	9	3	0	.750	393	269
Atlanta	7	5	0	.583	269	244
Carolina	4	8	0	.333	290	324
Tampa Bay	4	8	0	.333	218	329

North

x-Green Bay	12	0	0	1.000	420	262
Chicago	7	5	0	.583	291	242
Detroit	7	5	0	.583	333	277
Minnesota	2	10	0	.167	246	330

x-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Kansas City 10, Chicago 3

Shirley's Invitational Basketball League Regular Season

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Shirley's Marlon De Dios pulls up for a shot against PSS/McGraw-Hill's James Villacrusis.



PSS/McGraw-Hill's Gus Palacios drives against Grillin's Rocyl Ritual, left, and Lerio Pagara during their regular season game in the Shirley's caging at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.



Pacific Islands Club/NVM's Ponce Rasa, right, blocks Mobil's Bart Demapan.



Mobil's Marvin Rabauliman looks to pass to a teammate as he faces Pacific Islands Club/NVM center Zack Diaz.



Fiesta's Ivan Devero loses his balance after colliding with PSS/McGraw-Hill defenders.



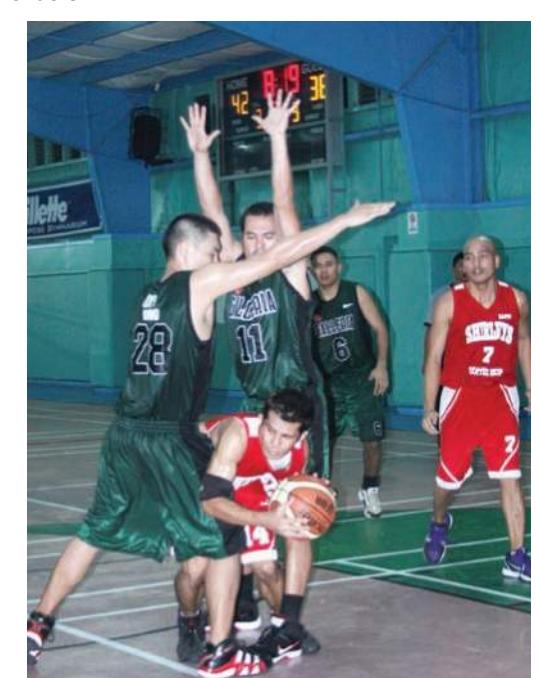
DFS Galleria's Junar Guiab, left, tries to keep his balance against PSS/McGraw-Hill's Marlon Cabrera.



Mobil's Gyles Ruluked goes for an undergoal stab against two Fiesta defenders.



Grillin' Sonny Lerio, left, pulls up for an off-balance jumper against GPPC's Randy Mungcal.



Two DFS Galleria defenders sandwich Shirley's Fradel Sedillo.



**Packers clinch
playoff berth with
win over Giants**

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Saipan Tribune Sports

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Saipan Badminton Club triumphs

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

No contest. Saipan Badminton Club swept all its 11 matches against the Berks Blazers to top the 5th Annual Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament last Sunday at the TSL Sports Complex.

The one-sided championship showdown was decided as early as after the sixth match of

the night, as SBC won all via sweeps and earned 18 games won. The eventual champions went on to wrap up the finale with a 31-2 tally.

The champion club is composed of Dick Guintu, Gary Bandoja, Oh Inbog, Kok H. Pang, Oh Anyeol, Joel Ortega, Kang Yun Moo, Hannah Choi, Toshiko Obata, Heo In Sook, So Young Lee, Sunja Kim, Kim Boranah, Lee Sang Mi, Alma Ortega, and Lee Eun Yee.

Kang and Oh Anyeol teamed up in the men's doubles C and



ROSELYN B. MONROYO



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Saipan Badminton Club's Sunja Kim makes a return during her and Toshiko Obata's women's doubles A game against the Berks Blazers' Lanie Bartolome and Marlene Peraja in the Traders Insurance badminton tournament last Sunday at the TSL Sports Complex.

trounced Rommel Bartolome and Roman Neri, 21-7, 21-10. The two other men's doubles

matches were also completed after only two games with Bandoja and Oh Inbog downing

4 make November's best list

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association managed to complete the list of top performers for November during last Thursday's meeting at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Making up the roll were bowlers Alex Castro and Lala Taitano, swimmer Kensuke Kimura, and junior tennis player Mikayla Lopez. Castro and Taitano were named November Male and Female Athletes of the Month, while Kimura and Lopez took the student monthly awards.

Castro was selected for November after winning the Saipan Bowling Association-Budweiser King of the Lanes Tournament last month. Castro had a four-game total of 797 pinfalls to beat 11 other bowlers and win the monthly roll-off for the first time.

Taitano was also a first time winner in the monthly competition and was cited for her

four-game total of 718 pinfalls in the Queen of the Lanes tournament. Taitano prevailed over nine other female keglers.

Kimura clinched the November Male Student Athlete of the Month plum for representing the CNMI in the FINA World Cup in Tokyo, Japan and joining the Tsunami Saipan Swim Circuit Series.

The Grace Christian Academy student raced in the 100m individual medley and 50m freestyle in the FINA World Cup and submitted personal best times of 1:03.95 and 26.26 seconds, respectively.

When he returned to Saipan from Japan, Kimura joined the first leg of the swim circuit series and had another PBTs in the 100m freestyle, 50m backstroke, and 50m butterfly events. He broke the one-minute barrier in the 100m freestyle, clocking in at 59.06 seconds, becoming only the fifth swimmer in the CNMI to achieve that feat, joining the company of Dean Palacios,

See LIST on Page 26



Lewie leads age group winners in 'Hell'

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Micronesian Games veteran Lewie Tenorio was the first Saipan biker to the finish line in last Saturday's 5th Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race and went on to top his age group.

Tenorio completed the 100-kilometer race in three hours, 28 minutes, and 38.41 seconds to rule the men's road bike 36 to 45 division, beating 15 other bikers. Tenorio came in 12th overall and his time last weekend was about three minutes faster than his 2010 record of 3:31.02.84. He was also the first male finisher for Saipan in last year's century race.

Tenorio defeated perennial rival Butch Sublemente, who was nursing a back problem and

See LEWIE on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Lewie Tenorio makes a turn to Laolao Bay Golf Resort during the first 25-kilometer of Saturday's 5th Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race.



WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
Blue Haus' Badong Camacho blocks a driving San Roque player during their rained-out game in the DLX caging last Friday at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

3 teams retain undefeated record

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

MDX extended its win streak, following a 74-47 demolition of FGC during the first game in the 2011 DLX Basketball Invitational Friendship League last Saturday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

League-leading MDX limited FGC to four points in the third quarter en route to a very convincing win, the former's fourth in as many games.

Both teams started slow with See 3 TEAMS on Page 26

